

Philippe de Mézières and His Age

Piety and Politics in the Fourteenth Century

Edited by

Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Kiril Petkov



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Philippe de Mézières and His Age

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Cover illustration: British Library Royal 20 B. vi. (Philippe de Mézières' *Epistre au roi Richart*). Folio 2r. Presentation Miniature. In this imagined scene, Philippe presents his work to Richard II, King of England.

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The Editors

INTRODUCTION

Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Kiril Petkov

Few figures of the past stand for an epoch—any epoch—and fewer still can claim to have left their imprint on most if not all of its principal developments. In the rich and colorful mosaic of the fourteenth-century, Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405) undoubtedly holds the pride of place. A scholar, a soldier, and a diplomat, a mystical thinker and a man of affairs, a chancellor of the realm of Cyprus and an advisor to the king of France, an incessant traveler around the Mediterranean and a landowner with many stakes, a prolific writer and a worthy peer of the top nobility of the age, an associate of religious and civic orders, a fanatic champion of the crusade and no less an ardent advocate of peace in the West, a Frenchman, a Cypriot, and a Venetian citizen, Philippe was the fourteenth-century man of all seasons, if there ever was one. The condensed spirit of the age reverberates through him with an intensity hardly ever seen in others.

This volume is inspired by the conviction that figures like Philippe, rare as they are, open heuristic windows to their worlds that can yield insights unmatched by other means. They provide us with living samples of the human tissues that hold an age together as a coherent unit. Their lives and deeds, when appropriately documented, shine as a vivid picture of the ideas and practices that animated the past. They allow us to relive it with them. Focusing on such individuals does not simply validate the humanistic approach to history. It also offers forceful proofs and correctives to the cold conclusions of structural and meta-inquiries. A century of critical investigation of Philippe's achievements has built a solid foundation in that respect. This volume goes further in its ambition to add the current generation's pithy contribution.

Let us briefly introduce the man. Born a Picard, scion of the middling nobility with fiefs in the vicinity of Santerrois, Philippe studied grammar in Amiens' cathedral school and then left for Paris, thinking perhaps for a short stint at the university. But the calm life of a scholar was for not for him: by 1345, a teenager, he was already in Italy, in the retinue of Andrew of Hungary. After the latter's assassination, Philippe joined Humbert of Viennois in the crusade of Smyrna in 1346 and upon its

end stayed in the East. In 1347, we see him as pilgrim to Jerusalem: a turning point of his life, since the visit lit a flame in him that would go on to stoke up his spiritual life to the end of his days. On the way back he stopped in Cyprus, then took up service with a variety of masters in Iberia and France, fighting in the Reconquista and the Hundred Years War. In 1359, he was back in Cyprus, where the new king, Peter I Lusignan (1359–1369), soon made him Chancellor, and where he began a deep friendship with the papal legate and Latin patriarch of Constantinople, the Carmelite Peter Thomas. Together with the king and Peter Thomas Philippe perambulated European courts in search for support for a crusade, a quest that became an obsession for him. In 1365, he participated in what could have been the fulfillment of his dream, the crusade of Alexandria, only to see it slipping from his hands. New diplomatic assignments followed. While on the move, he found time to pen the *Life of Peter Thomas* (1366) and the regulations of a new *Order of the Passion* (1367), the knightly core of the future crusade. Upon Peter's assassination in 1369 Philippe remained in Venice, where he obtained citizenship and property and, apparently deeply depressed, thought about retiring from active life. Writing helped and consoled; his campaign to introduce the feast of Mary's Presentation is highly indicative of his mood. Time worked its wonders though, and so did his restless nature. In 1371, he was again on the move, this time to Avignon on behalf of Peter II, the new Cypriot king. Shortly thereafter he returned to France, where his connections and reputation secured him a pension, some property, and a position at the court, soon to be appointed by Charles V to the post of adviser to his young heir. In the following years, Philippe served his masters on a variety of diplomatic missions, to Italy, Flanders, and Avignon. The death of Charles V in 1380 impacted him heavily. Philippe withdrew to the convent of the Celestines in Paris, trading sword and mantle for the pen, and taking to writing with the same ardor and skill he had demonstrated as a mercenary and a diplomat, applying himself to the great idea that captivated him in 1347, the retaking of the Holy Land. To this end, Philippe engaged in furious writing, putting together spiritual and moral treatises, letters, and missives to quell the warring in Christendom, reform its morals on all levels (marriage among them as well), and rekindle the spirit of crusade among Western leadership. Here he composed his greatest works, the allegorical *Le songe du vieil pelerin* (1386–1389), a variety of spiritual and moralistic writings, his *Epistre au roi Richart II*, and, finally, the sad lament of the disaster of the crusade of Nicopolis, the *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*

(1397). That was his last work. Worn down by age and disappointment, Philippe fell silent, to re-emerge in 1405 with a testament and, most likely, with the wording of his own epitaph.

At that point, Philippe fades from written record. Time drew the veil of oblivion upon the copious trail of words he left to posterity. Two centuries later, however, he was conjured up to life by the early historians of the Celestines.¹ Since then, Philippe has gained an ever larger presence in every new methodological trend in history and literary scholarship. By the mid-1700s antiquarian methodology—what facts were there to report about him—had exhausted itself. A new hiatus followed for about a century. By the mid-1800s, as critical inquiry embraced positivism, interest in Philippe revived. This time, the focus was archival, biographical, and literary.² It peaked with the indefatigable Nicolae Jorga. In 1896, Jorga published the only and still indispensable political biography of Philippe, thorough and wide ranging, though firmly set in the context of the crusade. Philippe's literary output was left largely unexplored.³ Still, as it appeared, Jorga had put together the definitive work. The perception persisted through the next century, while a steady stream of editions made available the works Jorga had used in manuscript.⁴ By the 1980s, a critical mass was reached. Four contributions by Olivier Caudron unleashed a new wave of publications on Philippe, first in the familiar field of political biography, then in a stream of studies steadily enlarging in scope.⁵

¹ Louis Beurrier, *Histoire du monastère et couvent des Célestins de Paris, contenant les antiquités, privilèges, etc.* (Paris, 1634), 291–392; A. Becquet, *Gallicanae coelestinorum congregationis monasteriorum foundationes, viromque vita et scriptis illustrium elogia historica* (Paris, 1719); Jean Lebeuf, “Mémoire sur la vie de Philippe de Mézières, conseiller du roi Charles V et chancelier du Royaume de Chypre,” *Mémoires de l'Académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 17 (1753), 491–514.

² P. Paris, “Nouvelles recherches sur l'auteur du Songe du Verger,” *Mémoires de l'Académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres* n.s. 15 (1843), 369–98; Victor Brants, “Philippe de Mézières et son projet de banque populaire,” *Revue catholique* 49 n.s. 23 (Louvain, 1880), 591–602; Auguste Molinier, “Description de deux manuscrits contenant la règle de la Militia Passionis Ihesu Christi de Philippe de Mézières,” *Archives de l'Orient latin* 1 (1881), 335–64.

³ Nicolae Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières, 1327–1405: La Croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896). Jorga had already discussed Philippe's letters in “Une collection de lettres de Philippe de Mézières,” *Revue historique* 49 (1892), 39–57, and later followed with a study of his testament, idem, “Le testament de Philippe de Mézières,” *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'étude de L'Europe sud-orientale* 10–12 (1921), 119–40; see also Ilija Golenishtchev-Koutuzov in Bibliography.

⁴ See Bibliography, Edited Works.

⁵ Olivier Caudron, “Philippe de Mézières étudiant à l'université de Paris,” *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes* 139 (1981); idem, “La spiritualité d'un chrétien du XIV^e siècle: Philippe de Mézières,” *Positions des thèses de l'Ecole nationale des chartes*

This volume offers a sample of the modes in which the latest trends in historical and literary scholarship engage Philippe as a man of his age, complemented by studies on critical background contexts. It is organized around Philippe's and fourteenth-centuries' chief guiding paradigms, piety and politics. While seamlessly co-existing in the subject and time, the duo has been effectively separated in scholarship. Reintegrating these two concepts in their inquiries, the contributors to this volume pose several questions left unanswered on the march from antiquarianism to post-modernism. To what extent was Philippe de Mézières representative of his age? Did he have a sound grip on the realities of his time? What informed his worldview? How did he relate to the principal persons and developments of his time? What was his impact on his contemporaries? Ultimately, the larger methodological question explored in these, and other, inquiries in the volume is about the heuristic value of scholarly investigation vested in a single individual. These, and other, issues are explored in the four sections of what follows.

Philippe was a man who situated himself at the crossroads, geographically, spiritually, and literarily. His many movements between Occident and Orient, his spiritual fervor that however never culminated in an ecclesiastical career, his many works that blend literary complexity with political and religious goals make him the outstanding exemplary figure of late fourteenth-century European culture. Philippe Contamine, in his profound and beautiful appreciation of Philippe's life and works, shows him as a man embodying the tensions of his age. While the Orient as a kind of "lung" allowed Europe to breathe—spiritually, economically, and intellectually—it also constituted a danger to Philippe's profoundly Christian ideal of reconquering Jerusalem. In order to realize this dream Philippe worked for peace and began organizing a new chivalric order that would include mar-

(1983), 35–45; idem, "Philippe de Mézières." *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, 12:1, cols. 1309–16 (Paris, 1984); idem "Un épisode de la guerre de Cent Ans: Philippe de Mézières, capitaine de Blérancourt dans les années 1350," *Mémoires de la Fédération des sociétés d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Aisne* 29 (1984), 69–73. See also the works (chronologically) of Georges Gazier, Abdel Hamdy, Max Lieberman, Dora Bell, Alice Goullemain, Janet Ferrier, Walter Puchner, Joël Blanchard, Luigi Pesce, Sylvie Lefèvre, Kiril Petkov, Michael Hanly, Anna Loba, Philippe Contamine, Daisy Delogu, Andrea Tarnowski, Raymond Esclapez, Joan B. Williamson, Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Stefan Vander Elst, Anne Romine, and Christoph Brachmann in Bibliography.

ried couples who were to colonize the Holy Land. He also served as a bridge between Eastern and Western spirituality through his labors to introduce the Byzantine feast of the Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple. His play celebrating this event in the Virgin's life is a landmark in theater history.⁶ This spiritual transfer, as Contamine puts it, parallels Philippe's itinerary which finally leads him back to the Occident, to the home he eventually makes for himself in Paris, first at the royal court and then with the Celestines where he remained, as he had been his entire life, deeply involved in both the political and spiritual issues of his time.

While Philippe now stayed put geographically, his literary production went far afield. His travels around the Mediterranean found their echo especially in his *Le songe du vieil pelerin*. What does literature tell us about how things were done in the fourteenth-century Mediterranean? This is the question Sharon Kinoshita explores with a focus on Boccaccio's Cypriot merchant of *Decameron* 10.9. Here we have a Muslim sultan disguising himself as a merchant from Cyprus and a Lombard passing himself off as a Saracen! Focusing on Mediterranean "connectivity," Kinoshita makes a case for a common culture in this area that would make such disguises plausible. In a wide-ranging study of dynasties, artistic production, and texts like Frederick II's *De arte venandi* Kinoshita paints a fascinating portrait of an intricate and shared "Mediterranean culture of objects and practices," and she even takes us forward into the twentieth century when she shows us how some of these objects were re-appropriated for France's "colonial past" in a 1931 exhibition. A previously shared culture has thus become hierarchical.

Philippe was connected southward to Italy, Cyprus, and the Holy Land but his compass also included the north where he played his role as a driving force behind European ambitions in the Middle East as well as a transmitter of Italian culture, as Michael Hanly and Evelien

⁶ See *Philippe de Mézières' Campaign for the Feast of Mary's Presentation*, ed. William E. Coleman (Toronto, 1981); Paulette L'Hermite-Leclercq, "Avignon en fête: Présentation de la Vierge au Temple de Philippe de Mézières le 21 novembre 1372," in Philippe Contamine, Thierry Dutour, and Bertrand Schnerb, eds., *Commerce, Finance et Société (XI^e-XVI^e siècles): recueil de travaux d'histoire médiévale offert à M. le Professeur Henri Dubois*. Cultures et civilisations médiévales 9 (Paris, 1993), 327-39. Walter Puchner has published extensively on this play, see especially *The Crusader Kingdom of Cyprus: A Theatre Province of Medieval Europe?* (Athens, 2006), which in addition to a thorough study includes a new critical edition of the *Presentation*.

Chayes demonstrate in their studies of the many links between Philippe and Italian and English knights and scholars. While Hanly focuses on Philippe's participation in what could be termed a fourteenth-century "peace movement," Chayes examines a number of important letters connecting Philippe to Petrarch. Hanly places Philippe in the company of men like Chaucer, Langland, and the French diplomat Honorat Bovet to illuminate his political mission that centered on achieving European peace in order to unite the forces necessary for a new crusade. He posits an intellectual and military "confederacy," which on the English side included many of the men that Adrian Bell scrutinizes in this volume. Hanly also makes a case for Philippe's role in the westward and northward diffusion of Italian texts, in particular through his relation with Petrarch.

This giant of Italian culture is at the center of Chayes' careful reading of a number of letters found in manuscript 499 of the Arsenal library in Paris. The death of a soldier, Giacomo dei Rossi, served as an inspiration for these letters, which Chayes places into the context of ancient rhetoric, conventions of the epistolary genre, and even Italian tomb architecture. She recreates the world of the political and intellectual culture of her protagonists, a world that once again is characterized by the concepts of links, of "connectivity," between south and north exemplified by the journeys, pilgrimages, and trajectories of people, sources, and manuscripts. These letters serve as a touchstone not only for the close friendship between Petrarch and Philippe but for the contention that permeates our volume: that Philippe is a point of convergence as well as a conduit for some of the most important political, literary, and spiritual ideas that shape Europe at that time.

But Philippe was also part of a network of political thinkers within the narrower confines of Parisian court and university circles, as Lori J. Walters shows in her analysis of the political theology that unites Philippe, Jean Gerson, the chancellor of the University of Paris, and that prolific author of allegorical and political works Christine de Pizan. For Walters the key to the link between these figures is the concept of "seulette," denoting the need for a solitude that would enable these busy personages to reflect in a contemplative mode on the politics of their time and to devise effective means for political intervention. Walters traces the contacts between these three thinkers on a practical and on an ideological level, demonstrating convincingly that all of them, in an Augustinian mode, hoped to gain the insights necessary

for giving good political counsel by retiring now and then from the very world they hoped to change for the better.

This task became Philippe's central preoccupation after he returned to Paris, where he was appointed as advisor to king Charles V and as tutor to his son, the future Charles VI. Now he could begin to place his spiritual and political ideals into a concrete didactic context; he did this most extensively in *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, addressed to the young king to whose education he had contributed so much. In this text Philippe developed the model of the natural king. "Natural" for him meant not only that a king is legitimate by hereditary succession but also, and more important, that a king must possess certain qualities that make him fit to rule. Daisy Delogu analyzes what the qualities are that will make a king a worthy custodian of the kingdom. Drawing on contemporary political theory transmitted through French translations of Aristotle's *Politics*, she shows that kingship is not an "ontological but a performative status:" if a king exercises well-ordered power over free subjects all is well, but if he seeks dominion over enslaved subjects tyranny results. Kevin Brownlee's subtle reading of the image of Cyprus and its crusader-king Peter I as biblically-inspired allegories and of the use of figural typologies in *Le songe du vieil pelerin* maps out Philippe's textual strategies for crafting a model and a cautionary tale for the young French monarch Charles VI. Displaying a mastery of the multi-layered biblical exegesis and inspired in part by Dante, Philippe poised recent Cypriot history as a double-pronged *exemplum* for the king, which he would do well to partly follow, partly correctively reverse in the service of his country, the mission of Christendom in the grand scheme of salvation history, and the crusade. Philippe's educational project for the ideal king took very concrete forms, down to a reading list for the young king. Stefan Vander Elst scrutinizes Philippe's reading recommendations by placing the texts Philippe deems suitable for Charles VI into the larger context of contemporary discussions about the effects of chivalric romance on the nature and future of fourteenth-century knighthood. He finds that Philippe, unlike a number of other didactic writers at the time, sees no merit in the kind of love service that many knights—some chivalric orders even attempted to recreate specific romances—saw as a profound inspiration for honorable deeds. For Philippe amorous passion creates a "whirlwind" of war, dissent, and treason and thus has to be avoided at all costs. While he praises some Old Testament heroes and

singles out several Greek and Roman models, his attitude to Alexander the Great, an often used exemplar for heroism and generosity, is conflicted and most often negative. Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas explores this phenomenon in depth. While in the first two books of *Le songe du vieil pelerin* Philippe adopts a more or less neutral attitude toward Alexander, seeing in him at least a partially acceptable model for certain aspects of royal power, he condemns him in the third book by placing him, through his supposed magician father Nectanébus, into the context of astrology and magic, areas of knowledge that for Philippe equal superstition and eternal damnation. Alexander now stands for the tyrant who exercises illegitimate power. For Philippe, the only literature that can truly form a just king is not romance but texts of an edifying nature.

And yet, numerology and alchemy make numerous appearances in the *Songe*, as Joël Blanchard demonstrates. His analysis of the intricate schemes Philippe adapts from Pseudo-Dyonisius shows that Philippe replaces his triple hierarchy with a quadruple one, thus giving pride of place to the number four as “a living image of the social body.” In addition to these numerological schemes that structure Philippe’s lessons for the king, alchemy is also present throughout the text, not as a recipe for making gold, however, but as a recipe for fabricating the perfect king. Philippe’s alchemy is purely allegorical and is linked to the central image of the forge of good money. The idea of the forge and the purity of the desired money opens the door for Philippe to offer critiques of many parts of his society, especially of the legal profession, whose useless services he considers the ultimate waste of time and money. Money is the central metaphor for Philippe in many different ways: money must be pure and it must circulate. Andrea Tarnowski explores the connections between monetary and literary circulation in her study of how this kind of circulation can bring Philippe the consolation he so ardently desires. One of the names he gives himself in the *Songe* is in fact Ardent Desire. While Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy* by needs adopted a linear structure, the *Songe* returns at the end to the chapel of the Celestines where Philippe began his vast dream journey. Focusing on the concept of circulation—of money, of texts, of meanings—Tarnowski suggests that the final closing of the circle represents the production of Philippe’s book, which in turn represents the consolation he had sought all along.

But Philippe did not only seek consolation for himself, he also strove to aid others, notably married couples who may not be able to find in

marriage the salvation they had hoped for. In his *Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*, an extremely involved multi-level allegorical work, Philippe gives pride of place to Christs' Passion as a key to the essence of mystical and real marriage. The *Livre* deals with four kinds of marriage, of which three kinds are spiritual and one real, that is, a marriage between a man and a woman. Anna Loba places Philippe's extremely complicated development of concepts of marriages between the soul, God, Christ, and the church into a contemporary devotional framework shaped by mystical thinkers like Suso or Ruysbroeck. Her close readings reveal many parallels between prayers and mystical texts by these authors and others like Gertrud of Helfta. However, Philippe never aspired to mystical ecstasy. His devotional practices and prescriptions always remained moderate and the involved mystical imagery he uses in the *Livre* is designed to give consolation to his readers by pointing to an alternative interpretation of marriage, one that does not involve the dangers of sensuality and the difficult challenge of trying to live a life of devotion amidst the hassles of everyday life.

Philippe the writer was a man of profound piety, a mystic given to allegory and metaphor, an author floating on imagery derived from everyday life but couched in moralistic universals, thriving on obsessive and profoundly otherworldly paradigms. Piety and politics coexist without difficulty in his literary output. The critics' verdict has been that his Christian idealism rendered his political designs a mirage, pursued in the dreams of his allegories, but with little, if any, chance of practical implementation in the late fourteenth-century world. The failure of Philippe's political and diplomatic effort to organize a full-scale crusade or to hold onto the achievement of the Alexandria expedition seem to reinforce that argument. But was he so otherworldly, so blinded by his passion, so much more a man of piety than judgment, so much a relic of the past, and a person out of whack with Western and Levantine realities? The re-evaluation of his political and diplomatic experiences offered in the next sections tips the scales the other way: Philippe emerges from it as a more this-worldly and connected thinker than ever.

In the fourteenth-century Mediterranean, little could be accomplished without the co-operation and, even better, wholehearted support of the heavyweights, Venice and Genoa. Philippe had visited both, entreating, cajoling, and offering concessions to engage them in the crusade. It was not an easy task. The difficulty was exacerbated by the chronic conflict between the republics. Enlisting both of them in a

joint venture would be unrealistic. A choice had to be made. Philippe had little doubt: Venice was the true ally. He had paid several visits to the city before 1369 and was honored with citizenship in 1366. There he sought refuge during the period of darkest psychological depression following the murder of Peter I. The city healed him; little wonder he heaps praise upon it. Yet, he had been to Genoa as well, and had been treated well there too. Why Venice then? Michel Balard explains: it was not a sentimental choice. A roster of political ideas, loyalties, and pragmatic considerations of crusade led Philippe to embrace Venice. It was a preference well placed but, ultimately, not truly attuned to the trade policies of both republics: in the end, Venice emerges not so much as an active agent in his obsessive drive for crusade than a mental device to allay his anxieties and provide psychological reassurance.

Psychologizing Philippe in such a way helps us, perhaps, understand his complex personality, in which the ideal cohabited happily with a hardheaded appreciation of the pragmatic sides of fourteenth-century warfare in the service of the crusade. Not really the “morose idealist” as John France reveals, he had a real grasp of the difficulties facing any crusading initiative of the time. The fourteenth-century political landscape had atomized, the large states faced daunting obstacles in collecting funds for their local pursuits. Meanwhile, the Christians’ opponents had synthesized an extremely agile and competent combat method. From a purely military view, conventional crusading warfare was no longer feasible. The conception of the Order of the Passion then is a tribute to Philippe’s pragmatism: the design of a small, dedicated, self-sustaining, standing fighting unit, a flexible and efficient muscle, the nucleus of a larger army that might or might not realize, but certainly capable of tearing through the lines of the Muslim armies entrenched in the Holy Land. Such units were just about to take shape in contemporary Europe: Philippe was well in line with the latest in the military fashion of the day.

The Order however, was only the crack troops. Larger involvement was necessary to secure its planned re-conquest. How feasible, however, was it to count on that involvement? And if Western princes supported the design, would their knights embrace it? Anne Curry takes on Philippe’s attempt to re-direct the ferocious energies of the Hundred Years War to the Levant to address the former issue. Her subtle and thorough reevaluation of the *Epistre au roi Richart II* underscores Philippe’s realistic take on Anglo-French relations. All exhortation and pious entreaties aside, a close reading of the manuscript shows

that he got it right: the young English monarch was neither ready nor willing to engage himself and his kingdom in something so costly, so out-of-sync with his policies, and so inconvenient as the crusade. Nor was he a “man of peace.” Philippe used the trope, but it was to flatter, not to characterize. Richard could, however, give crusade enthusiasts a break: by refraining from re-opening hostilities with France, a move that would free his knights to enlist in Philippe’s Order and take them to the Levant. That was all Philippe expected, and the re-positioning of the letter puts his design in the context of the long Anglo-French truce of 1389–1395 and the possible prospects for ending the War. Once again, Philippe was on a firmer ground than usually thought, and well-attuned to political realities; an astute political observer who hoped for the designed outcome, but knew better all the while.

If the kings shied away, what did their subjects think? Philippe’s chief vehicle of the crusade, the Order of the Passion, was to be staffed by leading Western men of arms. Faithful vassals as they were, they were also agents in their own right, capable of influencing royal policies—if they found the call for crusade militarily, financially, and politically feasible, that is. As Adrian Bell’s detailed analysis of the lives and careers of English knights demonstrates, there were top English nobility who might have felt that way. Philippe knew it, and crafted a carefully thought-out financial plan of the Order geared toward men who shared membership of the Order of the Garter, had already been involved in crusade (in Prussia) and had visited the Holy Land, had been on diplomatic service abroad, and had extensive military careers. The Order was not a fantasy gathering of pious chevaliers. It was the outline of a new network, putting together men with the required qualification, likely predilection, and proven record. The variables were the knights’ enthusiasm and the quicksand of contemporary political realities. It would be unfair, to say the least, to expect Philippe to be able to fully account for these factors.

Philippe’s assessment of what he knew best, the situation of Christendom, was therefore quite sound, pragmatic, and realistic. How apposite were his plans in the light of what we know about the contemporary situation in the Levant? Gaining the Holy Land meant to engage it properly: with the right armed force, the right leaders, and in the right spot. It also entailed a proper evaluation of the adversary. A host of contemporary voices and later observers join Philippe here, putting in perspective the weight of mysticism and pragmatism in his designs.

Leadership was a crucial factor in Philippe's vision of crusade. He lived in a leadership society where, when a man of rank took action, he sent a powerful impulse down the social scale. But a true crusade was work of God for Philippe as it has been for crusade propagandists ever since Pope Urban II's call, and the leader had to be a man of probity. To Philippe, no one fitted the bill better than Peter I Lusignan (1359–1369), the crusading ruler *par excellence* of the time. The delicate balance of crusading piety and realistic politics in Philippe can be assessed by analyzing how far his portrait of Peter I strays from what can be reasonably concluded about the king's complex personality on the base of other sources. That Peter I was bent on crusade is hardly to be disputed; his character and motivations are another matter altogether. Ambitious, authoritarian, arrogant and selfish, often running roughshod over the interests of his feudal peers in the realm, an aggressive fighter but quite a pragmatic ruler when it came to balancing pious military expeditions with the economic interests of his island kingdom: such are the qualifications often voiced by contemporary observers. Peter Edbury offers a brief sketch on how Philippe reconciled Peter I's exemplary crusading credentials with less flattering images. It appears that he carefully picked and chose themes that enhanced the stature of his master, stressing favorable aspects of his reign and remaining silent on uncomfortable issues, refraining from inflating Peter's image to unrealistic proportions. Propaganda it was, but with a measure of restraint to it. Angel Konnari largely concurs. The first part of her essay scrutinizes the same issue through an extensive and detailed comparison between Philippe and Leontios Makhairas, the fifteenth-century Cypriot chronicler. Philippe's style of crusading rhetoric constructs a highly idealized image of Peter I, which clearly contrasts with Makhairas' more human and critical portrayal of the king. Against such a background, Philippe comes across as selective and one-sided, writer of a propagandistic mirror of the ideal prince rather than a chronicler of events. Then again, that was exactly the persona in which Peter I was feted by Western princes during his long sojourns at their courts. Philippe's idealization dovetails with the self-image of late fourteenth-century Christian princes; it was an indelible part of the charisma with which their quasi-theocratic rule was legitimized, a measure of their understanding of what kingship was all about. Philippe fed into the official self-representation of power in the West; Makhairas wrote from a different perspective, that of a Cypriot whose identity was vested in the feudal order.

Konnari's discussion marks the transition from West to East, from "self" to "other" and properly so, since Cyprus was on the fringe of both, inhabiting a typological area where the categories met and entangled, overlapped and hybridized, fought and fused. A measure of Philippe's pragmatic attitude transpires immediately here. While the crusade he dreamt about is allegedly conceived in terms of a universal, consolidating those with whom Philippe identified in the transnational category of "Christendom," more often than not his "others" are ethnically defined and interjected into, without eliminating them, the universalist confessional monoliths of Christianity and Islam. This applies to the Muslim adversary—the Arabs and the Mamluks are a problem, the Turks can be used—but the logic is thorough: even among Christians there are the ethnic, cultural "others," the Genoese being the foremost among them. Leaving Philippe's miscalculation on the role of the Turks aside, this mode of constructing the "other" is, again, the product of the intertwining of his principal guidelines (and perhaps his personal experience as well: Philippe owned a young Turkish slave whom he baptized). Paradoxically, piety fractures confessional unity. Piety dictated ethnic categorization among the Muslims in the Levant and minimizing of the Turkish threat so that the Holy Land remained sharply in focus. Politics in the service of a clearly defined objective required setting apart contingent friend from foe. Philippe's "other" was construed according to the level of engagement, in a seamless switching from pious (universalist) to political (ethnic) terms and back again, depending on the level and goals of discourse.

The intertwining of typologies, a characteristic of fourteenth-century Mediterranean literature as well, as Kinoshita points out, can serve as a heuristic vehicle for assessing Philippe's and Peter of Lusignan's major achievement—and, true to the paradigm, major failure as well—on the crusading front, the Alexandria expedition of 1365. For Alexandria was hardly, and in 1365 less than ever, an embodiment of the "other" no matter who the assessing "self" was. Since Salah al-Din prohibited Christians from entering the interior of Egypt, creeds and cultures met and mingled in Alexandria for the sake of commerce and the greater glory of that universal equalizer, profit. In the middle of the fourteenth century, several trading nations maintained *funduks* there—among them the Cypriots—and all of them were sacked and devastated by Peter's crusaders. David Jacoby's detailed discussion of commercial traffic, Western presence, and profits from interfaith trade and pilgrimage in Alexandria and Henri Gourinard's account of the futile

attempts of the Mamluk authorities to separate economy from politics (in the form of espionage) provide the indispensable background to any attempt to understand fourteenth-century crusade. The very heterogeneity of fourteenth-century Alexandria made it the target of crusade. While all-out confessional conflict running contrary to entrenched economic positions had little chance of large-scale support, the conjunction of local, economic and political interests could still fuel clashes ostensibly undertaken in the name of lofty ideals. Crusading expeditions with limited objectives, such as the sack of Alexandria or the venture of Amedeo VI of Savoy launched the following year, demonstrate that crusade could still be good for the soul, good for Christendom, and good for the purse. Unity of agency, ideology, and goal—or piety and politics—was still possible where typologically diverse interests coincided temporarily but with spectacular efficiency. Philippe's fusion of piety and politics was thus not so much out of place.

Indeed, it appears to have been the norm, for Philippe's quintessential "other," the Egyptian Muslims, upheld it as well, although for quite different reasons. David Wrisley's discussion of the depiction of the sack of Alexandria by a contemporary resident, al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī, highlights the principles structuring his reflection on this traumatic event. al-Nuwairī weaves an account focused on the local and inspired by his affection to his native city, but shores up its meaning within the greater, universal trajectory of the historical progression and success of Islam. Through a set of stylistic and technical devices, al-Nuwairī uses the occasion to ponder on questions ranging from the linkages between past and present to the great dilemma of divine and human will. Local developments shade in poetic, historical, and religious metaphysics within the universal scheme of salvational history to fortify the community in its hour of need. al-Nuwairī employs Philippe's paradigms to trace a reverse causality: where Philippe took a conjectural junction of piety and politics to uphold a universal, al-Nuwairī had recourse to universals to infuse significance into a very unsettling local occurrence. Both authors worked with the same mental categories and instruments; only their focus differed.

Where does this volume leave us, adding as it does many new facts and interpretations to the portrait of the man in his age? One of the main tasks for further study of Philippe is the edition or re-edition of some major texts. Joël Blanchard and Antoine Calvet are working on an edition of Philippe's late work, the *Oratio tragedica*, which includes

some fascinating autobiographical passages that will allow us to assess Philippe's view of the successes and more often failures of his many idealistic projects and schemes. A new edition of the all-important *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, also by Joël Blanchard, will soon replace the seriously flawed Coopland edition.

Another possibly fruitful avenue of research involves gender studies. So far, Philippe has made few appearances in that arena. The few exceptions center on the role of Mary in his *Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple*. Susan Udry, for example, posits that Mary is meant to function as a model for both men and women here, encouraging powerful men to "put on the girl" in a mode of repentance.⁷ While not wholly persuasive, this article uses a gender studies perspective to tease out some new ways of reading Philippe. And what about the women who were supposed to accompany their husbands as colonizers of the Holy Land? Joan Williamson and Philippe Contamine are the only scholars who have paid attention to them.⁸ Much recent work had been done on gender relations and the roles of women in various crusades but Philippe's works are still stepchildren in this area.⁹

The contributions collected in this volume make it clear that Philippe is a key node, a pivotal figure in whom fourteenth-century political, spiritual, and literary currents converge and are carried throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. Whatever turn the study of the

⁷ Susan Udry, "Putting on the Girls': Mary's Girlhood and the Performance of Monarchical Authority in Philippe de Mézières's Dramatic Office for the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*," *European Medieval Drama* 8 (2004), 1–17. See also Paulette L'Hermite-Leclercq, "L'Image de la Vierge de la Présentation au Temple dans la pièce de Philippe de Mézières représentée à Avignon en 1372," in Dominique Iogna-Prat et al., eds., *Marie: le culte de la Vierge dans la société médiévale* (Paris, 1996), 361–80.

⁸ Philippe Contamine, "La place des femmes dans les deux premières règles (1367–68 et 1384) de l'ordre de la chevalerie de la Passion de Jésus-Christ de Philippe de Mézières," in Patrick Henriot and Anne-Marie Legras, eds., *Au cloître et dans le monde. Femmes, hommes et société (IX^e–XV^e siècles). Mélanges en l'honneur de Paulette L'Hermite-Leclercq* (Paris, 2000), 81–88. Joan Williamson, "The 'Chevalerie de la Passion Jhesu Crist': Philippe de Mézières' Utopia," in Danielle Buschinger and Wolfgang Spiewok, eds., *Gesellschaftsutopien im Mittelalter. Discours et figures de l'utopie au Moyen Age* (Greifswald, 1994), 165–73. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski offered a seminar at Paris VII in the summer of 2010 on utopian ideals of women's education in Pierre Dubois, a crusading ideologist of the early fourteenth century, and Philippe.

⁹ Christine Dernbecher, *'Deum et virum suum diligens'. Zur Rolle und Bedeutung der Frau im Umfeld der Kreuzzüge*. (St. Ingbert, 2003); Sabine Geldsetzer, *Frauen auf Kreuzzügen 1096–1291* (Darmstadt, 2003); Natasha R. Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Woodbridge, 2007).

fourteenth century takes, Philippe will not soon slip back into the night. His complex personality, fascinating life, and voluminous literary output have been a fertile garden well tilled by generations of intellectuals. There is little doubt that future inquiries will pursue its bounty, no matter what fruit they will be looking for.

A TANGLED WORLD:
LITERATURE OF CONNECTIVITY IN MÉZIÈRES' AGE

ENTRE OCCIDENT ET ORIENT. PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES
(VERS 1327–1405): ITINÉRAIRES MARITIMES ET SPIRITUELS

Philippe Contamine

En 1987, paraissaient, sous la direction de Henri Dubois, Jean-Claude Hocquet et André Vauchez, les deux volumes de *Mélanges offerts à Michel Mollat*, professeur à l'université Paris-Sorbonne, sous le titre général *Horizons marins, itinéraires spirituels (V^e–XVIII^e siècles)*. Si je me suis inspiré de cette formule pour désigner mon propos introductif, c'est d'une part qu'elle paraît convenir parfaitement à Philippe de Mézières et d'autre part que Michel Mollat, auquel n'étaient étrangers ni l'homme ni l'œuvre, aurait souhaité précisément que des recherches soient entreprises à leur sujet.

« Per hoc mare... fere LX annis navigavi. » Empruntée au *Soliloquium peccatoris cujusdam cum Deo seu ars navigandi ad portum salutis* (1386–1387), l'une des œuvres spirituelles encore inédites de Philippe, la métaphore n'a rien que de banal pour la culture chrétienne médiévale : la vie d'un chrétien était couramment comparée à une navigation au milieu des tempêtes et des récifs, mais une navigation guidée par l'Étoile jusqu'au port du salut¹.

Mais alors pourquoi Occident et Orient ? Car enfin Philippe est loin d'ignorer la distinction Nord-Sud, entre l'aquilon, ou septentrion, ou tramontane, et l'« austre ou midi². » Pensons à ce que dit la reine Vérité dans *Le songe du vieil pelerin* : « Nous avons visité les parties d'Orient et le centre de la terre qui est en Jherusalem et puis les regions de midy. Pour bien accomplir nostre voyage, je veuil que nous visitions les parties de Septentrion et puis venrons es parties d'Occident³. » Dans le prologue d'une ultime rédaction de sa règle de chevalerie (1396), il

¹ Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 408.

² Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du vieil pelerin*, éd. George W. Coopland, 2 vol. (Cambridge, 1969) (désormais *Songe*), 1: 233, chap. 15 ; 1: 301, chap. 41 ; 1: 582, chap. 133 ; « Les regions non tant seulement d'orient mais d'austre ou midi, de septentrion et de tout occident », A. Hamid Hamdy, « Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion (transcription of the Ashmole ms. 813 », *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Alexandria* 18 (1964), 47.

³ *Songe*, 1: 233, chap. 15.

se présente comme un « viel homme de petite apparence et de povre existence » qui, pendant plus de quarante ans, a été le « messagier especial de la royne Providence... en Orient, en Occident, en Midi et en Septentrion⁴. » On peut présumer qu'à la suite de Cassiodore Philippe n'ignorait pas le symbole selon lequel les quatre branches de la Croix étaient dirigées vers les quatre points cardinaux⁵. Il n'empêche que l'opposition « médiatique » Nord-Sud, désormais à tort ou à raison si présente à notre esprit, ne structurait manifestement pas sa pensée. En revanche, héritier de toute une tradition, il avait une pleine conscience de la division ou de l'opposition séculaire, quasi immémoriale (Homère, Hérodote), entre l'Ouest et l'Est. À propos d'Actium, que d'ailleurs il situe mal, ne dit-il pas, tributaire de l'historiographie classique, qu'Antoine et Octavien s'y affrontèrent « en mer entre l'isle de Chypre et Surie, a laquelle bataille furent aussi comme tout l'Orient et l'Occident, chacun a sa partie⁶? »

De façon plus évidente encore, Philippe connaît la division est-ouest de *l'Imperium romanum*, la propagation du christianisme à partir de Jérusalem, une propagation certes tous azimuts mais se manifestant de façon privilégiée vers les parties occidentales. Sont également très présentes à son esprit la conquête et la domination arabes au détriment de la chrétienté orientale. Il connaît aussi d'assez près l'histoire des croisades dont il a médité à la fois les réussites et les échecs, depuis Godefroy de Bouillon et depuis l'Amiénois Pierre l'Ermite, qui fut un de ses modèles⁷.

Il faut ajouter que les hommes de savoir—et Philippe en fait incontestablement partie—n'avaient pas oublié la division du monde en trois continents inégaux, l'Europe, l'Afrique et l'Asie, et que les pauvres et

⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 2251.

⁵ Voir aussi ce passage des *Histoires* de Raoul Glaber à propos du jour de la résurrection des saints : « Ce jour se trouvait annoncé par la position même de la Croix du Seigneur, quand le Sauveur y était suspendu. En effet, pendant que l'Orient avec ses peuples féroces était caché derrière la face du Sauveur, l'Occident, placé devant ses regards, recevait de ses yeux la lumière de la foi. Sa droite toute puissante, étendue pour le grand œuvre de miséricorde, montrait le Nord qui allait être adouci par l'effet de la parole divine, pendant que sa gauche tombait en partage aux nations barbares et tumultueuses du Midi », traduction de Jules Michelet au t. 2 de son *Histoire de France* citée par Daniel Halévy dans *Essai sur l'accélération de l'histoire* (Paris, 1948), 49.

⁶ *Songe*, I: 348, chap. 55.

⁷ Philippe de Mézières, *Une espistre lamentable et consolatoire adressée en 1397 à Philippe le Hardi duc de Bourgogne, sur la défaite de Nicopolis (1396)*, éd. Philippe Contamine et Jacques Paviot, avec la collaboration de Céline Van Hoorebeck (Paris, 2008).

petits Européens comme lui soupçonnaient ou pressentaient une Asie vaste, riche et peuplée, parée de toutes sortes de prestiges matériels et symboliques.

Bref, pour Philippe, de façon spécialement aiguë et comme existentielle, la chrétienté latine, ou occidentale (le poumon occidental, selon la formule de Jean-Paul II) était pénétrée ou plutôt aurait dû être pénétrée du sentiment d'avoir besoin de l'Orient, du poumon oriental, pour respirer à fond, spirituellement, économiquement, voire intellectuellement. On peut ici se demander si à l'époque l'Orient chrétien se sentait inversement « en manque d'Occident. » De toute façon, par définition, l'Orient médiéval disposait à la fois d'un Orient (la profonde Asie, à l'est de Jérusalem) et d'un Occident, alors que l'Occident ne disposait pas d'Occident, sinon bien sûr la mer océane censée le border⁸.

PHILIPPE ET SON ORIENT VÉCU

Sans qu'on puisse connaître exactement ses motivations, on peut supposer que le jeune Philippe, ce Picard relevant au mieux de la moyenne noblesse, ce puîné ou plutôt ce dernier né issu d'une famille nombreuse qui l'avait peut-être au départ destiné à l'Église, né, baptisé et éduqué à Amiens, était déjà pour le moins sensible à l'idée de croisade en tant que guerre sainte contre les infidèles et en tant que pèlerinage en armes lorsqu'il décida, après une courte expérience militaire en Italie du Nord et du Sud, autrement dit en Lombardie auprès de Lucchino Visconti et dans le royaume de Naples auprès du roi André de Hongrie, premier époux de la reine Jeanne I^{ère}, de partir, tel un fétu emporté par le vent, *ad partes orientales*⁹. C'était quand même faire un choix car déjà la guerre franco-anglaise, surtout depuis 1339–1340, sévissait à proximité de sa province d'origine, destinée bientôt à « faire frontière. » D'une certaine manière il prit le risque d'affaiblir le royaume de France. Il ne fut pas le seul : ainsi en fut-il de Geoffroy de Charny, son aîné d'une génération, qu'il devait connaître précisément

⁸ Rappelons qu'au début du XIII^e siècle Jacques de Vitry écrivit une *Historia occidentalis* et une *Historia orientalis*.

⁹ Sur la Picardie à la fin du XIII^e siècle, voir les dernières pages du livre de Robert Fossier, *La terre et les hommes en Picardie à la fin du XIII^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris et Louvain, 1968) ; on peut supposer que Philippe naquit à Amiens plutôt qu'au château paternel, à Mézières-en-Santerre, situé à environ 25 km au sud-est d'Amiens, Nicolas Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières, 1327–1405, et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896), 11–13 (désormais Jorga).

en Orient¹⁰. Philippe se métamorphosa donc en croisé, en combattant de Dieu, à l'occasion, semble-t-il, de la mise sur pied d'une nouvelle croisade, après des décennies d'interruption et cela malgré les projets qui virent alors le jour—une croisade aux objectifs définis par la bulle *Insurgentibus contra fidem* du 30 septembre 1343 où le pape Clément VI ordonnait qu'elle soit prêchée « contre ces infidèles païens appelés en langue vulgaire Turcs¹¹. » On peut ici parler d'un tournant, qu'explique bien sûr le contexte militaire. Jérusalem, sous domination sarrasine ou mamelouke, passait ainsi assez brusquement à l'arrière-plan stratégique tout en conservant son aura spirituelle¹². Somme toute, la carrière de Philippe se déroula précisément au moment de ce passage : il en fut le témoin et dans une certaine mesure l'acteur.

Cette croisade s'organisa en deux vagues, la première ayant eu pour résultat la prise de Smyrne, suivie de la défaite des chrétiens le 17 janvier 1345, la seconde ayant eu pour chef Humbert II, dauphin de Viennois, lequel offrit à l'Église de secourir Smyrne avec cinq galères, 300 chevaliers et 1000 arbalétriers. Après avoir pris la croix à Avignon en mai 1345, il s'embarqua à Marseille en septembre, débarqua à Gênes, traversa l'Italie, arriva à Venise le 24 octobre. Il repartit en novembre. Il y eut quelques escarmouches dans la mer Égée, un petit débarquement (juin 1346) suivi d'une deuxième bataille de Smyrne. Mais rapidement Humbert se découragea, il gagna Rhodes, où il perdit sa femme qui l'avait accompagnée (janvier 1347), il songea un moment à accomplir le pèlerinage de Jérusalem, mais finit par y renoncer. On le trouve à Venise en juin 1347, à Milan en août, en Dauphiné à l'automne.

Même s'il ne parle pas du dauphin de Viennois, on peut supposer que Philippe, alors en Italie, se joignit à son expédition, peut-être à Venise, d'où il aurait pris la mer pour la première fois. Il participa à la deuxième bataille de Smyrne, y fut fait chevalier, y fut gravement blessé, puis, *via* Chypre, où il aurait fait la connaissance du futur Pierre I^{er} de Lusignan, roi de Chypre, alors comte de Tripoli, il aurait débarqué à Jaffa ou ailleurs et aurait accompli le pèlerinage à Jérusalem, lequel s'accompagna ou se traduisit par une expérience mystique qui

¹⁰ Philippe Contamine, *Pages d'histoire militaire médiévale (XIV^e–XV^e siècles)* (Paris, 2005), 175.

¹¹ Jacques Paviot, éd., *Projets de croisade (v. 1290–v. 1330)*, préface de Jean Richard (Paris, 2008).

¹² Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, from Lyons to Alcazar, 1274–1580* (Oxford, 1992).

devait se révéler spirituellement décisive. Tel fut son premier contact avec l'Orient non pas rêvé mais réel¹³.

Et puis, son devoir et son dessein accomplis, il regagna l'Occident. Évidemment, le plus simple est d'imaginer un retour sur une galère jusqu'à Venise. Mais nous savons aussi qu'à un moment de sa vie, voire à plusieurs, Philippe passa « le destroit de Marog », c'est-à-dire le détroit de Gibraltar, qui « aucunesfoiz » lui « a fait suer de paour¹⁴. » Si la navigation dans les mers du Levant lui est incontestablement familière, on ne peut dire que la navigation dans les mers du Ponant lui soit totalement inconnue¹⁵.

Pour plusieurs années, Philippe, devenu le chevalier Philippe, vécut en France, avec deux occupations *a priori* difficilement conciliables : servir Philippe de Valois et surtout Jean le Bon dans leurs guerres en Picardie et aux frontières de la Normandie, poursuivre à Paris des études universitaires (à la faculté des arts ?). D'où mon interrogation : ce laïc aurait-il été tonsuré dans sa jeunesse ?¹⁶

Devenu nostalgique de l'Orient, on le retrouve dans le sillage ou l'entourage du chevaleresque et exalté « prince oriental » Pierre de Lusignan, qui, lui aussi, rêvait ardemment de croisade, et qui, à la mort de son père Hugues, survenue en 1359, devint roi de Jérusalem et de Chypre. Il entendait récupérer son héritage aux dépens des Sarrasins tout en se battant contre les Turcs d'Anatolie. À cette fin, il comptait sur les chevaliers décorés du « gracieux ordre de l'Espee¹⁷. » Trente ans plus tard, dans le *Songe*, Philippe met en scène une vieille femme qui s'adresse en ces termes à la reine Vérité : « Nostre yslle [Chypre] estoit

¹³ En effet, arrivé à Jérusalem, il fit célébrer une messe par le chapelain du Saint Sépulcre, « sur la tumbé de la sepulture du doulx Jhesu... par le commandement et au nom de la personne du grant prince oriental », lequel ne peut être que le comte de Tripoli (Jorga, 75-76).

¹⁴ *Songe*, 1 : 232, chap. 14.

¹⁵ Voir tous les développements dans le *Songe* sur la pêche du hareng, dans les mers du Nord, notamment en Baltique : « Je, vieil pelerin... jadis en alant en Prusse par mer, en une grosse nef, passay du long du bras de mer susdit par beau temps et en la saison susdicte que le harand se prent, et veiz lesdictes barges et vesseaulx et grosses nefes et mengeay du harant en alant que les pescheurs nous donnerent », *Songe*, 1 : 249, chap. 19.

¹⁶ Il n'est pas sûr cependant que les étudiants de l'université de Paris aient été obligatoirement tonsurés. Je dois ce renseignement à Jacques Verger, que je remercie vivement.

¹⁷ Dont parle Guillaume de Machaut dans le *Livre de la prise d'Alexandre* (*La prise d'Alexandrie ou chronique du roi Pierre I^{er} de Lusignan par Guillaume de Machaut*, éd. Marie Louis de Mas Latrie (Genève, 1877), 11-12.

[dans les années 1360] la noble chambre orientale et gracieux retrait des chevaliers de Dieu et des pelerins qui aloient oultre mer. Ceste ysle mal fortunee estoit le vray mur defensable de la crestienté d'Orient. C'estoit comme ung gracieux hospital des crestiens d'Occident. Et briefment, c'estoit la frontiere puissante et necessaire de la crestienté catholique. Madame, c'estoit la banniere de la croix encontre les ennemis de la foy, plus redoubtee que nulle autre en son temps qui puet estre trouvee.» Notre roi et ses sujets, poursuit la vieille, «ou milieu de XI nations et sectes de crestiens scismatiques», «tenoient la sainte foy catholique, par laquelle nostre ysle estoit fort redoubtee du soldan de Babilonne, des Sarrazins infiniz, des Tartres et des Turs de environ la contree¹⁸.» En ces quelques mots se trouve résumée la géopolitique de Philippe, pour lequel l'île de Chypre relève certes de l'Orient (de même que Rhodes, les îles de l'Archipel et la Crète) mais comme un bastion de la chrétienté d'Orient, qui s'y trouve repliée et réfugiée. Non seulement Chypre était alors redoutée mais encore prospère (car Philippe, grand admirateur de Venise, la «dame des eaux», cette cité qui se refuse à pratiquer la piraterie et se préoccupe de la sûreté des mers grâce à une flotte permanente de galères, fait toute sa place à la marchandise, aux échanges commerciaux comme source de prospérité: aux premiers temps du «vieil pelerin», à Famagouste, il y avait bien 60, 80, 100 vaisseaux de mer qui chaque année rapportaient d'Égypte et de Syrie jusqu'en Chypre la valeur de 100 000 florins de marchandises. Alors «en Chypre et en ladicte cité de Famagoste lors croissoit le fin or d'Arabie, les pierres precieuses, les espices, les beaux cameloz, les aromaz et les draps d'or et de soye et les grans richesses du monde, dont toute la crestienté en toute sa neccessité estoit gracieusement reparee et des souverains biens mondains et delictables doucement adournee. Quel merveille! Car lors il se trouvoit en ladicte cité marchans catholiques et crestiens de la ceinture et autres VII, ou VIII et X, qui faisoient marchandise, l'un d'un million de florins, l'autre de millions de florins sans nombre.» Mais tout cela, dit-il, est fini, aussi bien militairement qu'économiquement: alors qu'on y comptait autrefois de 30 000 à 40 000 combattants, il n'y en a plus que 200, les Turcs se risquent en pleine mer, s'emparent des chrétiens qu'ils réduisent en esclavage. Tout cela à cause de «ceste perverse gent genevoise dont

¹⁸ *Songe*, 1: 295-96, chap. 39.

la crestienté a si grant noise¹⁹. » Retenons du moins l'idée que pour Philippe croisade et marchandise ne sont nullement incompatibles, les deux notions peuvent et doivent faire bon ménage.

Devenu chancelier de Pierre I^{er}, Philippe vécut à ses côtés, notamment dans son palais de Nicosie, le suivit dans ses déplacements²⁰. Il le conseilla, l'admira, lui porta honneur et affection, malgré ses travers sur lesquels il demeure discret. On possède une lettre (sans doute écrite par le chancelier de Chypre) adressée le 15 juin 1362 par Pierre de Lusignan au gouvernement de Florence²¹. Il y demande son aide pour le recouvrement du Saint Sépulcre. On retournait donc résolument vers Jérusalem. Tel fut le début d'une grande tournée de propagande et de recrutement auprès des rois, des princes et des communautés politiques d'Occident. Elle mena Pierre I^{er} jusqu'en Angleterre, jusqu'en Allemagne, jusqu'à Prague, jusqu'à Cracovie. Bien sûr la France ne fut pas oubliée. Au total, le résultat fut aléatoire, en dépit des bonnes paroles, des fêtes et des tournois. Il n'empêche que Pierre I^{er} fut en mesure de quitter Venise, à la tête d'une flotte de guerre, le 27 juillet 1365. Le but de l'expédition—Alexandrie—fut, paraît-il, longtemps tenu secret car les Vénitiens auraient sans doute été mécontents de savoir qu'on allait se diriger vers une ville où était établi le plus important de leurs « fondiks. » Quoi qu'il en soit, Alexandrie, aussi peuplée que Paris, aussi attirante que Venise, aussi bien bâtie que Gênes, ce rendez-vous de tous les marchands, la vraie reine de l'Égypte (ainsi en parle lyriquement Pierre de Thomas dans une lettre au pape Urbain V), fut prise le 10 octobre 1365, mais presque aussitôt abandonnée, au grand désespoir des deux Pierre et de Philippe, présent en armes (Philippe n'a rien d'un pacifiste, son livre de prières montre sa dévotion envers les saints militaires, Georges, Maurice, Michel). De tristesse Pierre de Thomas, replié sur Chypre, mourut à Famagouste en janvier 1366.

Revenons en arrière. Normalement, le chancelier de Chypre aurait dû suivre son roi dans tous ses déplacements. Mais rien n'est moins sûr, et l'on a même quelques données de fait attestant le contraire. Il n'empêche que Philippe, d'une façon ou d'une autre, dut lui aussi parcourir l'Europe. Bien des passages du *Songe* en portent la trace. Puis il aurait retrouvé son maître à Venise et l'on peut affirmer qu'il

¹⁹ *Songe*, 1: 298–99, chap. 39.

²⁰ *Songe*, 2: 228, chap. 231.

²¹ Jorga, 142.

se fait historiographe, en même temps qu'hagiographe, lorsqu'il décrit non sans enthousiasme la flotte des croisés dans sa *Vie de saint Pierre de Thomas*²². Des chiffres sont fournis, auxquels il n'est pas interdit de se fier : une galère fut offerte au roi par Venise, le roi partit de Venise pour Rhodes avec plusieurs vaisseaux chargés de 500 chevaux et presque 600 combattants et marins. À Rhodes arriva la flotte de Chypre, soit presque soixante navires, dont des galées et des huissiers. Le maître de l'Hôpital offrit cent chevaliers d'élite choisis dans son ordre. Au départ de Rhodes, Philippe, en expert, parle de presque cent navires, galères, huissiers, lins, etc., montés par mille nobles en armes, par environ 10 000 combattants et par environ 1400 chevaux. Une flotte, un corps expéditionnaire estimables, mais « qu'était-ce contre le soudan [de Babylone] et contre tant de Sarrasins²³ ? »

L'échec de la croisade d'Alexandrie, douloureusement ressenti en Occident (les preuves ne manquent pas, de Froissart à Chaucer en passant par Pétrarque) fut pour Philippe un tournant, mais non une abdication. En souvenir de son « père en Dieu » Pierre de Thomas, il ne renonça pas à poursuivre son dessein, sa chimère, non plus d'ailleurs que Pierre de Lusignan. Toutefois, pratiquement, après l'assassinat de ce dernier en janvier 1369, s'achèvent les périples maritimes de Philippe, dont les déplacements, d'ailleurs progressivement plus rares, furent désormais terrestres. Il est un temps de naviguer, il est un temps d'avoir navigué, il est un temps de se souvenir d'avoir navigué. C'est ce qu'on montrera plus loin.

Malgré tout, il ne faut pas imaginer Philippe, même entre 1359 et 1369, faisant constamment la navette entre Chypre et l'Italie, entre Famagouste et Venise. Il eut à l'évidence quelques solides expériences de la vie en mer, il en observa les modalités, les contraintes, mais en nombre limité. Ce qui ne l'empêche pas de donner des conseils, des définitions précises, comme d'ailleurs souvent les forgers d'utopies. Ainsi pour la « tafforesse », un terme qu'il est le seul apparemment à utiliser en moyen français : « Tafforesse est un vessiau de mer qui va a XX ou XXX rimes et porte de XVI a XX chevaux et a ledit vesseau une grant porte a la poupe, et ne li fault que II ou III palmes d'eau [tirant d'eau : entre 18 et 27 cm]. Et toutes les fois que ladicte tafforesse

²² *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas by Philippe de Mézières*, éd. Joachim Smet (Rome, 1954).

²³ *Ibid.*, 125–27.

veult arriver en terre des ennemis, les gens d'armes seront montés sur leurs chevaux dedens le vessiau, le bacinet en la teste et la lance au poing, sans nul destoubier, aussi comme en ung moment ystront du vesseau et yront courre soudainement sur leurs anemis et s'il seront chassié, il rentreront tout a cheval dedens la tafforesse malgré les anemis en tantost se retrairont en mer. Tels vesseaulx sont propres en grans rivières et flumaires des anemis et fera plus de damage une tafforesse que ne feroient deux ou troys galees armées²⁴. » On est donc en présence d'une barge de débarquement ou d'une variété d'« huisier. » Comment ne pas songer à Arromanche, à Omaha Beach, à Utah Beach, en juin 1944, pour un autre type de « croisade » ?

ORIENT ET OCCIDENT DANS L'ORDRE DE LA PASSION DE JÉSUS-CHRIST: 1367–1368

Surmontant l'échec programmé de la croisade d'Alexandrie, Philippe, fidèle à la mémoire de son guide spirituel, de son mentor, relança ou plutôt lança son idée de « nouvel ordre de chevalerie » et entreprit d'en rédiger la règle et de la faire connaître. Il s'agissait à ce stade de susciter un corps expéditionnaire de plusieurs milliers de combattants volontaires ayant fait vœu de pauvreté, d'obéissance et de chasteté conjugale, voués à la reconquête et à la conservation de la Terre sainte et qui, avec femmes et enfants, s'y installeraient sans esprit de retour. On pourrait presque parler à ce sujet d'une colonie de peuplement. Après quoi, un *passagium generale* viendrait compléter et consolider l'opération. Formule classique depuis le début du XIV^e siècle.

De cette rédaction, conservée dans un ms. unique de la Bibliothèque Mazarine en provenance du couvent des célestins de Paris où Philippe devait se retirer à partir de 1380²⁵, j'extraits, dans la perspective envisagée, les passages suivants, cités textuellement ou résumés, en utilisant aussi la version française contenue dans *La Substance de la chevalerie de la Passion du Christ*, un texte rédigé vingt-cinq ans plus tard à l'intention de Richard II et de la noblesse anglaise²⁶.

²⁴ *Songe*, 2: 435, chap. 284.

²⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, 1943.

²⁶ Hamdy, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 2).

Il faut savoir, expose Philippe, qu'il existe deux «générations» de chrétiens orientaux. L'une est combattue nuit et jour par les Agaréens (les «ennemis de la foy»), ainsi sont les Chypriotes latins ou catholiques et les Hospitaliers. À moins qu'ils ne soient rapidement secourus par leurs frères occidentaux, ils seront détruits et le nom du Seigneur disparaîtra des parties d'Orient, ce qu'à Dieu ne plaise. Déjà, la majeure partie de ces nations a abandonné la foi du Christ, comme l'empire des Grecs, le royaume d'Arménie et d'autres régions non petites en nombre, à la honte des «grans princes catholiques», à la seule exception de Pierre de Lusignan, avec l'aide de sa chevalerie chyprïote, des Hospitaliers et de plusieurs nobles des parties occidentales²⁷. Mais, hélas, il n'a pu avoir que très peu de secours de ses frères les chrétiens d'Occident en vue de retenir les cités et les châteaux qu'il avait conquis, ce qui était pourtant un «grant commencement» pour la conquête de la «sainte terre de promission.»

L'autre génération de chrétiens d'Orient comprend les Arméniens, les Grecs, les chrétiens de la ceinture, les Nestoriens, les Jacobites, les Géorgiens, les Indiens, les Nubiens, les Éthiopiens, les Chaldéens, «toutes ces generations de crestiens» qui, «a grant dolour meurent en vivant soubz le treuage dez Sarrasins, Turs, Tartres et autres ennemis de la foy.» Et pourtant il est venu pour eux le temps de l'enfantement mais ils n'ont pas la force d'enfanter. Quelqu'un dira peut-être: «Ces chrétiens sont peu par le nombre.» En vérité, ils sont pléthore, quoique dispersés dans la vallée des larmes, flagellés, installés à l'ombre de la mort. Manquant de force, ils s'interpellent en disant: «Ne verrons-nous pas nos frères chrétiens occidentaux, puissants par les armes, par les chevaliers et par le peuple, venir à notre secours en troupes armées?» Quel est celui dont la poitrine est tellement de fer et le cœur tellement de pierre pour ne pas gémir et répandre des larmes en écoutant l'affliction de nos frères chrétiens orientaux? Même les schismatiques doivent être secourus. L'idée, puisque les princes, sous toutes sortes de prétextes, sont indisponibles, est qu'il convient de recruter dans le «moyen état» la chevalerie de la Passion du Christ, laquelle s'installera pour toujours «en la terre des anemis de la foy et non pas en terre de crestiens ne es illes de mer, en Orient demourera en combatant, les terres conquerra et tout ce qui sera acquis fer-

²⁷ Il apparaît donc qu'à la date de la rédaction de la règle le roi de Chypre était toujours en vie.

mement retendra jusques a la mort sans jamais retourner es parties d'Occident pour posseder priourés ou commanderies ou autres possessions donnees a la sainte chevalerie et sera ostee de nostre sainte chevalerie toute maniere d'occasion de posseder et de tenir en propre.» (Naturellement, c'est l'Hôpital qui est ici visé). Cette chevalerie aura pour elle l'attrait de la nouveauté, elle fera souche dès lors qu'elle sera composée de gens mariés. Elle sera assez prudente, assez sage, assez forte pour ramener à l'obéissance de l'Église de Rome les Grecs et les schismatiques et aussi pour lutter contre les Turcs, «jam ad portam catholicorum appropinquantes²⁸.»

Formulé à Venise ou dans l'île de Chypre (on peut s'interroger), le projet de Philippe ne trouva pour l'heure guère d'écho, alors qu'à la même époque ou un peu avant (1366–1367) il faut signaler l'entreprise d'Amédée VI, comte de Savoie, qui reçut la bénédiction du pape Urbain V et les encouragements de l'empereur byzantin Jean V Paléologue, puisqu'il s'agissait en principe du *negotium defensionis Grecorum* contre les Turcs.

Je n'entreprendrai pas de suivre pas à pas les destinées de son grand dessein. Je rappellerai seulement qu'à un certain moment le contexte diplomatique fut tel qu'il ne fut pas exclu que la paix se fasse, après soixante années de guerres et de dévastations, entre la France et l'Angleterre. Depuis soixante ans (nous sommes à un moment important dans la formation du concept de guerre de Cent Ans), une plaie pleine de venin, une plaie purulente, une plaie mortelle a envahi «toutes les parties de la crestienté et par especial les parties occidentales.» Telle est ce qu'il appelle la «grande plaie occidentale.» En vue de la guérir, Philippe écrivit en 1395 une *Épître* au roi Richard II (Philippe est l'homme des épîtres) dont je tire la parabole suivante. Un certain roi Malavisé, par négligence, oubli de la justice et de la «discipline de chevalerie», en vint à perdre au profit de son voisin, le roi Vigilant, son royaume et sa maîtresse cité, au point d'être obligé de se réfugier dans une lointaine et froide contrée. Victorieux, le roi Vigilant fit trois choses: 1. détruire et brûler publiquement les bannières, les armes et les enseignes du roi Malavisé; 2. bannir celui-ci de son royaume; 3. maintenir tous les hommes du dit royaume en servage. Le roi

²⁸ Auguste Molinier, «Description de deux mss. contenant la règle de la *militia Passionis Jhesu Christi* de Philippe de Mézières», *Revue de l'Orient latin* 1 (1881), 335–64.

Malavisé comprit sa faute. Du coup, pour ne pas l'oublier, il demanda à ce qu'un vieux chevalier de sa cour lui rappelle périodiquement les injures et les dommages infligés par le roi Vigilant. Explication de la parabole: le vieux chevalier, c'est Philippe. Le roi Malavisé, c'est la personnification de l'empereur de Rome—mention intéressante—et de tous les rois chrétiens catholiques. Le roi Vigilant, c'est le sultan de Babylone. On l'aura compris: par sa négligence, le roi Malavisé a perdu la sainte cité de Jérusalem, «la maistre cité du royaume general des crestiens», «le premier fondement de la foy catholique», ainsi que tout le royaume et que toute la Terre sainte, qualifiée de «païs et terre publique de la crestienté», certes confié à un seul roi mais un roi en quelque sorte délégué de tous les rois de la chrétienté. Suite à ces malheurs, les rois chrétiens se sont réfugiés en Occident alors qu'ils auraient dû habiter à Jérusalem et «es parties d'Orient pour la multiplicacion de la foy.» Il convient donc que le roi Malavisé se métamorphose en roi Bienavisé. Le temps est venu de réédifier Jérusalem la sainte cité. Souvenons-nous des injures que «la faulce generacion de Mahommet» fait subir au Calvaire et au Saint Sépulcre. Souvenez-vous (il s'adresse à Richard II) de la «tres sainte foy catholique» aujourd'hui foulée, déshonorée, détruite, laissée à l'abandon à Jérusalem, en Syrie, en Égypte, en Turquie et dans tout l'Orient. Jésus a fait Charles VI et Richard II les «chevetaines ensemble de son pueple d'Israel, c'est assavoir de la crestienté d'Occident pour la mener en la terre de promission.» Notation intéressante: pour Philippe, le peuple élu, le nouvel Israël, c'est l'Occident, seulement l'Occident. Et une fois que vous aurez conquis la Turquie, l'Égypte et la Syrie qui sont remplies de toutes richesses et de toutes délices, «vous ferez peu de compte de vos royaumes d'Occident qui sont et frois et engelez», souvent dédiés et enclins à l'orgueil, à l'avarice et à la luxure²⁹. Un argument peut-être pour convaincre les deux rois de se faire des concessions mutuelles à l'intérieur de cet Occident devenu ou redevenu négligeable car pauvre et périphérique. En simplifiant, on dira que pour Philippe l'Occident, c'est la puissance, l'Orient, c'est la richesse.

Certes, les rapports entre fidèles et infidèles tels que les envisage Philippe sont de nature essentiellement conflictuelle. Toutefois, d'une part (pieuse formule) il envisage l'éventuelle conversion des infidèles

²⁹ *Letter to King Richard II. A plea made in 1395 for peace between England and France*, éd. et trad. George W. Coopland (Liverpool, 1975), 97–100.

(car il a en tête la réformation de toute la race d'Adam et non pas des seuls chrétiens), d'autre part il n'exclue pas que le comportement de sa sainte chevalerie ne modifie les regards des infidèles sur les chrétiens, même si les temps ne sont pas mûrs et même s'il faut bien constater qu'ils refusent le « fin besant » et s'entêtent à demeurer les adeptes de la « fausse alquimie » du « faux Mahomet. » La *Sustance* estime que la chevalerie pourra peut-être aboutir à la paix, car elle tiendra ses promesses sans feinte. Elle aura une pratique « debonnaire » envers ses ennemis en tout cas sarrasins, leurs prisonniers capturés en bataille ou ailleurs seront traités humainement, « trop autrement qu'il n'est acoustumé. » Parfois même elle les libérera, en délaissant toute rigueur, « et quant les ennemis de la foy congnoistroient bien ceste grant humanité en nostre chevalerie », ils jetteront sur elle un autre regard.

Notamment avec les Sarrasins et le soudan de Babylone il est loin d'exclure des rapports diplomatiques corrects, voire confiants, grâce à l'envoi d'un émissaire qui persuadera le soudan de la bonne foi des puissances chrétiennes et en particulier de Charles VI auquel il recommande précisément de rechercher son amitié en lui envoyant un écuyer sage, prud'homme, loyal, connaissant ces régions et leur population, comme jadis l'avait fait Charlemagne, avec comme résultat ou comme espoir que le soudan traite correctement les innombrables chrétiens placés sous sa domination, lesquels prieront pour lui. Il s'agit d'avoir, sauf en matière de foi, « bonne amitié morale avec le soudan. » De la même façon, un autre écuyer sera envoyé auprès des seigneurs de Turquie, d'autant que les Turcs, c'est bien connu, sont apparentés aux Français³⁰.

Quant aux schismatiques, même s'il s'en méfie beaucoup, les soupçonnant dans l'*Epître lamentable* de préférer secrètement les ennemis de la foi aux chrétiens catholiques, tout n'est pas perdu pour ou avec eux, toujours grâce au rayonnement spirituel de la sainte chevalerie, parée de toutes les qualités. « Il est doucement a croire que les dis scismatiques de tant de vertus enluminés en Dieu se convertiront et retourneront a la sainte foy de Romme catholique. »

³⁰ *Songe*, 2: 425–27, chap. 282.

LA FÊTE DE LA PRÉSENTATION DE LA VIERGE AU TEMPLE :
L'INTRODUCTION EN OCCIDENT D'UNE FÊTE ORIENTALE

Philippe fut certes l'homme de la croisade, son obsession, mais peut-être, comme le note Olivier Caudron³¹, Nicolas Iorga dans son maître livre a-t-il quelque peu forcé le trait, et après lui Alphonse Dupront, ce qui était inévitable compte tenu de sa problématique³². La spiritualité de Philippe n'est pas seulement celle de la croisade, reprise de celle de saint Bernard, à moins bien sûr d'admettre que tout chrétien, en tant que pèlerin, est aussi virtuellement un croisé.

On peut penser que la fin de l'aventure chypriote et surtout son très long séjour à Venise (une cité d'intense dévotion, vouée à la gloire de Dieu, comme devait la percevoir Philippe de Commines, et non pas seulement une ville de marchandise et de domination, à l'interface de l'Orient et de l'Occident) entraînèrent chez Philippe une sorte de conversion intérieure³³. Il fréquenta la confrérie des *Verberati* de Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste, il entra en contact avec les chartreux du monastère de Montello, près de Trévise. On peut parler ici d'un élargissement, d'une inflexion de son horizon spirituel. De fait, ce fut d'abord à Venise qu'il s'employa à introduire dans le calendrier liturgique occidental, à la date du 21 novembre, la fête orientale (grecque) de la présentation de la Vierge au Temple, telle qu'en parlent des écrits apocryphes.

Dans le texte composite relatif à cette introduction, l'on relève d'abord le grand sermon dont il est sinon l'auteur du moins l'inspireur, commençant par cette parole de l'Évangile selon saint Matthieu (24, 27) : « Sicut enim fulgur exit ab Oriente et paret usque in Occidentem, ita erit et adventus Filii hominis » [De même que l'éclair part de l'Orient et arrive jusqu'en Occident, ainsi sera l'avènement du Fils de l'Homme]. Il n'y a pas moins de quatre fêtes particulières de la Vierge venant de l'Orient et qui ont gagné l'Occident. Les philosophes,

³¹ Auteur d'une thèse de l'École nationale des chartes, inédite, sur la spiritualité de Philippe. Seules les positions en sont parues, *Positions des thèses* (1983), 35–45. Voir aussi son article Philippe de Mézières dans le *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, 12 (Paris, 1983), 1309–16.

³² Alphonse Dupront, *Le mythe de croisade*, 4 vol. (Paris, 1997), 256–98 et 1809–33. Voir aussi, dans le cadre du colloque de 2000 sur Alphonse Dupront, dont les actes sont à paraître prochainement par les soins de l'École française de Rome, ma contribution « Croisade, réformation religieuse, politique et morale de la chrétienté au XIV^e siècle : Philippe de Mézières (vers 1325–1405). »

³³ Philippe de Commines, *Mémoires*, éd. Joël Blanchard, 2 vol. (Genève, 2007), 1 : 586–87.

les mathématiciens le disent : la lumière procède de l'Orient. Le soleil de l'Orient fait le jour, le soleil de l'Occident introduit la nuit. Après sa course, le soleil se joint à l'Océan puis revient en Orient en passant sous la terre par des voies inconnues (Isidore de Séville) (La cosmographie de Philippe n'est pas spécialement novatrice). De même que la lumière corporelle sort de l'Orient pour apparaître en Occident, de même la lumière spirituelle. Le sage Adam fut mis au paradis terrestre, lequel se situe en Orient. Marie peut être comparée à la lumière, n'est-elle pas qualifiée d'*illuminatrix*? Or, cette lumière sort de l'Orient, lieu de sa naissance. Le pouvoir ecclésiastique qui commença en Orient a été transféré en Occident. De fait, l'Église romaine, qui est occidentale, est, grâce à Dieu, la tête, la dame et la maîtresse de tout et de tous. Les mages sont venus de l'Orient, guidés par l'étoile, pour se rendre à Jérusalem. (Ambiguïté de Jérusalem, qui est à la fois le centre du monde, une ville d'Orient, et, dans ce cas, pour les mages, une ville d'Occident). Vient une citation d'Isaïe, 43, 5 : «Noli timere, quia ego tecum sum : ab Oriente adducam semen tuum et ab Occidente congregabo te» [Ne crains rien, car je suis avec toi. D'Orient je ferai revenir ta race et d'Occident je te rassemblerai]. «Certains vénérables seigneurs, dévots de la glorieuse Vierge, qui ont vu célébrer et ont célébré la solennité de sa présentation au Temple, veulent et désirent de tout leur cœur que cette solennité soit célébrée dans les parties d'Occident, dans ce lieu à savoir la curie romaine, notre Très Saint Père Grégoire XI le permettant et le tolérant, où se trouvent des chrétiens de presque toute la terre. De même en effet que de l'Orient sortent la lumière, la splendeur et la chaleur, de même spirituellement les fidèles chrétiens ont eu de l'Orient la lumière de cette nouvelle solennité, la chaleur de l'affection et la splendeur de la dévotion.» La protection de Marie est étendue à nous tous jusqu'en Occident (sens géographique), c'est-à-dire du début jusqu'à la fin du monde (sens chronologique). Comme le dit Genèse, 28, 14 : «Eritque semen tuum quasi pulvis terrae : dilataberis ad Occidentem et Orientem et Septentrionem et Meridiem et benedicentur in te et in semine tuo cuncta tribus terrae» [Tu déborderas à l'Occident et à l'Orient, au Septentrion et au Midi et seront bénies en toi et en ta semence toutes les tribus de la terre]. Nous retrouvons ici nos quatre points cardinaux.

Vient ensuite la lettre sur la solennité de la fête et sur sa nouveauté dans les parties occidentales. Philippe, infime chevalier picard, indigne chancelier du royaume de Chypre et abortif dévot de la glorieuse Vierge Marie, s'y adresse principalement aux chrétiens occidentaux.

Les infidèles qui nous entourent le constatent : les pestilences, les séditions, les mortalités, les guerres, les trahisons, les hérésies ont surgi à notre époque, spécialement en Occident. Dieu nous a fouettés et nous fouette encore, par la mort, par le glaive, par la faim, par la captivité, selon la prophétie de Jérémie. Et Philippe propose comme remède d'emprunter à l'Orient la fête en question. Il imagine l'Orient se portant spirituellement au secours de l'Occident malmené parce que coupable. Cette fête ignorée des Occidentaux, il a demandé au pape de l'instaurer universellement. Ainsi, suscité par le culte de la Vierge dont Philippe était un dévot non seulement convaincu mais passionné, voire exalté, est proposé cet emprunt (inattendu en cette fin du Moyen Âge) à l'Église chrétienne d'Orient, et, au moins indirectement, à l'Église grecque quoiqu'elle soit schismatique.

Il convient ici de souligner l'ambiguïté du mouvement : en un sens, la lumière, le salut viennent de l'Orient, mais ce mouvement est accompagné d'un transfert spirituel et institutionnel dont bénéficient à leur tour l'Occident et notamment la curie romaine, devenue le centre vivant de la chrétienté. Avignon serait-elle, plutôt qu'une nouvelle Babylone, une autre ou une nouvelle Jérusalem ? À vrai dire, Philippe, même pour les besoins de sa cause, se garde bien d'aller jusque là³⁴.

LA « PARABOLE DE LA NEF » FRANÇAISE

L'on revient à la Jérusalem mystique et aussi à l'itinéraire marin dans l'ample parabole de la nef française contenue dans le *Songe*. Il y avait autrefois, dit la reine Vérité, dix-huit grosses nefs royales, autrement dit dix-huit royaumes chrétiens, qui, « en la mer Adriane, Medytriane et Occeane » (les trois mers que Philippe connaît et qu'il a parcourues), accomplissaient leurs voyages, faisant « grosses marchandises en multipliant le besant³⁵. » Parmi elles figurait une nef « si grande, si haulte et si sollennelle » que par comparaison les autres paraissaient de

³⁴ *Philippe de Mézières' Campaign for the feast of Mary's Presentation edited from Bibliothèque nationale mss. latin 17330 and 14454*, éd. W. E. Coleman (Toronto, 1981).

³⁵ Un lieu commun de l'époque voulait que la chrétienté compte non pas dix-huit mais dix-sept royaumes, Philippe Contamine, « L'hospitalité dans l'Europe du milieu du XV^e siècle : aspects juridiques, matériels et sociaux, d'après quelques récits de voyage », dans *La conscience européenne au XV^e et au XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1982), 81.

petites ou de moyennes embarcations. Cette grande nef avait deux noms : Gracieuse et Souveraine. À partir de là, Philippe va exposer, à grands renforts de comparaisons et de correspondances marines, parfois fort précises, comment autrefois la nef française, car c'est d'elle qu'il s'agit, une nef de guerre capable de se défendre et susceptible avec ses trois ponts d'abriter et de faire vivre toute une société, estimée à un millier de personnes, « d'ordres et d'estaz, de personnes et de condicions, de mestiers et de degrez » divers, était en mesure, grâce à ses trois timons, de naviguer au compas par temps calme aussi bien que par gros temps, mue par une voile marquée d'une grande croix rouge. Même les malades y étaient soignés. D'autant que le prince de la nef, qu'il appelle « Chrestien » (le roi très chrétien), pouvait compter sur des patrons et des conseillers de qualité. Ce puissant prince avait entrepris de tant naviguer que finalement il puisse parvenir avec ses passagers à Jérusalem pour trouver et acheter « le vray elixir et la vraye pierre du philosophe. » Et pendant toute la durée de ce long trajet, il faisait sa marchandise partout où il passait, notamment avec les dix-sept autres nef : toujours cette philosophie politique des échanges. Sur cette nef, le prince et son entourage vivaient dans un sobre appareil. Toutes les marchandises entrant dans la nef payaient certes un droit de douane mais dans la clarté et la modération : ni taille, ni gabelle, ni imposition foraine. Le prince était à la fois riche et aimé. Les marchands de la nef Gracieuse se contentaient de gagner non pas 100 ou 150 %, comme maintenant, mais 10 % l'an. Il n'y avait ni mauvais sergent ni avocat ni procureur, official, promoteur ou appariteur, ni malfaiteurs, ni larrons. La bonne foi régnait aussi, en sorte que pour les contrats on n'avait pas besoin d'utiliser la peau d'un taureau ou d'un mulet comme de nos jours pour les libelles du parlement et du Châtelet : un acte de dix ou douze lignes suffisait pour attester une transaction de 100 000 florins. Or, « ceste glorieuse nef maroyant par la mer et faisant son voyage avoit tousjours la prore vers Orient, tendant a la sainte cité de Hierusalem. » Et c'est ainsi qu'elle voguait à voiles déployées vers l'éternité.

Il est vrai que certains passagers n'allaient pas jusqu'à Jérusalem, en tout cas pas directement : ils s'arrêtaient dans l'île nommée Vulcain ou le Trouble. Des marchands, des princes, des patrons, des mariniers, des conseillers y demeuraient à jamais. Une autre partie s'arrêtait dans une autre île appelée la Touche, où leurs monnaies étaient éprouvées en vue de la « purgacion », jusqu'à ce qu'elles retrouvent leur bon aloi :

alors une « bullette » leur était accordée, qui leur permettait de reprendre, non sans retard, la route de Jérusalem.

Tableau classique, intemporel, mais voici que les événements s'en mêlèrent. D'où une approche cette fois historique, qui se superpose à la première. Il arriva que l'équipage et les passagers abandonnent « la loy des mariniers », les vents devinrent contraires. Les dames protectrices de la nef s'en allèrent, le vent d'aquilon régna, d'autres vents soufflèrent, il y eut un horrible mélange de tempête et de tourbillons, à quoi s'ajouta la conjonction de Saturne et de Mars. Aux batailles foraines, aux guerres extérieures vinrent se joindre les séditions, de patron à patron, de prince à conseiller, de marchand à marinier. Tant et si bien que l'une des dix-sept nef, appelée Malvoisine, heurtant le bord de la nef Souveraine, emporta d'un coup six châteaux du flanc droit et les garda 300 ans (en marge du manuscrit on lit « Normandie »)³⁶. Puis un prince de la nef Souveraine (Philippe Auguste) intervint, délivra les châteaux et « demeura la souveraine nef franche et en son bon estat. » Victoire provisoire, car cette nef, au propre temps du « Vieil pelerin », plongea de nouveau dans l'onde, elle fut malmenée par la cruelle nef Malvoisine, laquelle « debarata le pere » (Philippe VI), le mit en fuite, le vainquit, emporta le fils, qui mourut en exil (Jean le Bon). D'où des trahisons, des rébellions, des zizanies. Des patrons n'eurent pas honte de s'allier au seigneur de la nef Malvoisine (Édouard III). L'insécurité devint générale. Toutefois, après de si grandes et de si longues tribulations, Dieu suscita un jeune maître de la nef Gracieuse, fils de celui qui mourut en exil, « maladif et en sa chaire royale seant » (Charles V), qui répara la nef « par son bon sens et loyauté » sans toutefois pouvoir la radoubier entièrement. Il sut conclure des traités « faitz et soutilment pourchassiez » par sa « prudence, sapience et pacience merveilleuse », sans grande bataille, sans répandre le sang, il délivra ainsi la poupe, la proue, les flancs, le pont, « excepté un pou de forteresses es frontieres » (Calais, Brest, la Guyenne), demeurées en la sujétion de la nef Malvoisine, ceci pour tenir en humilité les grands patrons et les habitants de la nef (explication ingénieuse). Il faut dire qu'il ne détruisit pas les idoles, les planètes, les richesses superflues, c'est pourquoi il n'acheva pas son œuvre (critique explicite de l'*avaritia* et du goût pour l'astrologie manifestés par Charles V dont Philippe avait été le

³⁶ La future Normandie fut cédée par Charles le Simple en 911 à Rollon, lors du traité de Saint-Clair-sur-Epte.

conseiller). Et maintenant la nef est parvenue en droite ligne et par héritage à un «jeune, roidde et volant» maître (Charles VI)³⁷.

Philippe poursuit: s'il a choisi cette «parabole de la nef», c'est pour que les Français se convertissent sans amertume au moyen d'une «doulce medicine purgative», alors viendra la «crisis», c'est-à-dire le terme de toutes les maladies. Certes cette parabole peut paraître étrange à certains, qui interrogeront «ceulx qui ont fait les voyages par mer», mais elle est pourtant claire: elle assimile les quatre hiérarchies du royaume à une nef qui va par la mer, «en France [elles] font leur voyage et leurs marchandises, c'est assavoir leur vie, ou bonne ou mauvaise.» Parmi les mille personnes embarquées, les unes multiplient leurs besants (on pense bien sûr à la parabole évangélique des talents), les autres détruisent les forges des dames chargées de battre pour chacun la bonne monnaie, toutes tendent vers Jérusalem pour trouver l'élixir et la pierre philosophale, la grâce de Dieu et le pardon des péchés. Tous les navigants, les élus comme les réprouvés, se dirigent vers Jérusalem. Mais il y a ceux qui sont arrêtés en l'île de Vulcain, l'enfer (allusion ici à un saint ermite qui vit les diables y porter une âme, lesquels «confesserent que c'estoit l'ame du grant prevost de France», peut-être l'ancien prévôt de Paris Hugues Aubriot, qui précisément meurt en ou vers 1388 et dont la réputation était exécrationnelle). Et puis il y a l'île de la Touche, le purgatoire. Je n'insiste pas: un peu pesante, sans doute trop systématique, cette parabole a le mérite, dans la perspective retenue ici, d'avoir été élaborée par quelqu'un qui connaissait bien la mer, ou plutôt les mers, et qui maîtrisait jusqu'à un certain point le glossaire nautique³⁸. Cet apologue profus traite à la fois de la proche histoire du royaume de France, dont le roi est chargé, comme au temps de Moïse et de Charlemagne, de mener son peuple au salut, et du destin de chaque chrétien, ici de chaque Français, à titre personnel, car, comme devait le dire Pascal, nous sommes tous embarqués.

³⁷ On trouve une miniature représentant les deux nefes affrontées dans un manuscrit du *Songe* datant des années 1460, Philippe Contamine, «Un préambule explicatif inédit dans un manuscrit (milieu XV^e s.) du *Songe du vieil pelerin* (1389) de Philippe de Mézières: le texte et l'image», *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres* (2007), 1911.

³⁸ *Songe*, 1: 542–71, chap. 117–28 et 1: 589–92, chap. 137–38.

CONSIDÉRATIONS FINALES

Philippe, en dépit des apparences, n'était pas un caractère tout d'une pièce. Des divergences, simultanées ou successives, se manifestent dans ses postures. Ici, comment ne pas opposer sa spiritualité de plein vent, celle du pèlerinage, de la route, de l'espace, maritime et terrestre, de l'action (une spiritualité où s'imposent comme naturellement les références à l'Ancien Testament), celle aussi qu'on a le plus volontiers retenue, à la spiritualité de la réclusion, de la méditation solitaire, qu'il a développée au contact quotidien avec les « célestes célestins ? » On sait en effet que cet ordre, tourné vers la contemplation, était plus proche des chartreux que des franciscains ou des hospitaliers³⁹. Son étrange « testament » de 1392, pathétique et doloriste, n'est pas celui d'un chevalier mais d'un pénitent vouant à sa dépouille charnelle une haine illimitée⁴⁰. Il n'empêche que jusqu'au bout, comme en témoigne la prière qu'il a tenu à insérer dans le *Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage ou du reconfort des dames mariees* (vers 1384–1386), le cadre de sa pensée demeura la chrétienté ou plutôt les chrétientés. De cette prière, je ne citerai que le début, où il recommande à la Vierge, sa « tres doulce maistresse », « la sainte foy catholique en la crestienté d'orient, de Midi et de Septentrion, toutes les frontieres des crestiens rencontre les anemys de la foy » (telle une citadelle assiégée), Jérusalem, la Terre sainte, tous les chrétiens asservis par les ennemis de la foi, et notamment ses « freres catholiques. » Puis il passe à la « crestienté d'Occident », à l'Église de Rome, au pape, à « tous les roys, princes, seigneurs et gouverneurs de la crestienté d'Occident », à « tout le peuple de la crestienté d'Occident, amis et enemis, et par especial le pueple du royaume de France », et ainsi de proche en proche jusqu'à la Picardie, sa terre natale, et jusqu'à sa famille. Puis il élargit de nouveau le cercle en demandant « la pais universele de toute la Crestienté et par especial

³⁹ Karl Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner. Eine Mönchsgemeinschaft des späteren Mittelalters* (Husum, 2006).

⁴⁰ Pour ses obsèques, il refuse la représentation de ses armoiries, la présence d'un appareil militaire : « Au lieu d'aucun linsel eslevé et paré de ses armes vaines et mondaines avec chevaux et hommes armés que on eut par aventure representé a l'enterrement du malheureux pelerin si Dieu l'eust tant haï qu'il fust mors es cours des princes de ce monde », Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, « Le corps du prince. Le testament de Louis d'Orléans (1403), miroir de sa spiritualité », dans *Micrologus*, 7 (1999), *Il cadavere. The corpse*, 340. Édition du « testament » de Philippe par Alice Guillemain dans *Mélanges Jeanne Lods*, 2 vol. (Paris, 1978), 1: 297–322.

la pais, bon estat et bon gouvernement du royaume de France, du roy d'Engleterre, de nostre sainte mere Eglise et l'union d'icelle», et en recommandant «tous les sismatiques, hereges, rebelles et infidelz qui sont par tout le monde⁴¹.»

Philippe, confiné pendant un quart de siècle (1380–1405) dans sa cellule du couvent des célestins de Paris, parcourant à petits pas son cloître, appuyé sur sa «potence» d'infirmes, priant longuement dans sa chapelle privée en contemplant par l'imagination l'heure de sa mort, conserva jusqu'au bout une sensibilité à l'Orient—un Orient, réel et symbolique, pratique et mystique. C'est cette tension féconde entre Occident et Orient qui constitue sa marque. Au sein du concept d'«orientalisme», tel qu'Edward Saïd en a fait l'histoire, Philippe, pour la période clé correspondant à la chrétienté médiévale, occupe une place de choix⁴².

⁴¹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*, éd. Joan B. Williamson (Washington, 1984), 395–400.

⁴² Notamment dans son livre *L'orientalisme: l'orient créé par l'occident* (Paris, 1978).

“NOI SIAMO MERCATANTI CIPRIANI”:
HOW TO DO THINGS IN THE MEDIEVAL MEDITERRANEAN

Sharon Kinoshita*

I

This essay draws its title from a line in the *Decameron*—composed by Boccaccio c. 1350, a few years before his *Genealogia deorum gentilium* [On the Genealogy of the Gods of the Gentiles], which he dedicated to the Lusignan king Hugh IV of Cyprus.¹ In tale 10.9, in the run-up to the Third Crusade, Saladin sets off on a reconnaissance mission to Latin Europe posing as a Cypriot merchant. The ploy itself is unremarkable: in medieval literature, “merchant” was a favored disguise for noblemen wishing to travel incognito, especially across confessional lines.² What interests me here is the choice of the specific designation “Cypriot.” Why is “Cypriot merchant” Saladin’s disguise of choice? What might it have meant to his interlocutor, Messer Torello, a noble citizen of the northern Italian city of Pavia? What, in short, did “Cypriot merchant” signify in the mid-fourteenth-century Mediterranean?

Such questions are particularly interesting in light of a passage in a work composed some eight decades earlier and dedicated to a previous

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¹ On the *Genealogia*’s complicated chronology, see Boccaccio on poetry; being the preface and the fourteenth and fifteenth books of Boccaccio’s *Genealogia deorum gentilium*, trans. Charles G. Osgood (New York, 1956), xiii–xiv, n. 2.

² Twelfth-century French literature features Floire in the romance *Floire et Blancheflor* and Guillaume Fierebrace in the epic, *Le Charroi de Nîmes*. In *Decameron* 4.4, a friend of the Sicilian king’s grandson Gerbino poses as a jewel merchant to gain an interview with Gerbino’s beloved, the princess of Tunis. Compare Jean de Mandeville’s *Livre des merveilles du monde*, almost exactly contemporary with the *Decameron*, in which another sultan of Egypt knows all there is to know about the Christian world through the reports of “les gentz q’il envoie par toutes païs en gyse de marchantz des pieres precieuses.” *Le Livre des mervilles du monde*, ed. Christiane Deluz (Paris, 2000), 279.

Cypriot king.³ Book II of the treatise *De regno* [On kingship], attributed to Thomas Aquinas, offers a scathing, highly over-determined condemnation of commerce and those who practice it. In the context of an argument equating the security of a state with its economic self-sufficiency, what Aquinas deplores most about trade is the way it necessitates

continual contact with foreigners. But according to the teaching of Aristotle, association with foreigners commonly corrupts the morals of the citizens because men from foreign parts, nurtured on other laws and usages, inevitably behave differently in many ways from the customs of the citizens, and when their example influences the citizens to act in similar ways, civic life is disturbed.

The commercial pursuit of gain inevitably entails greed; thus through trade “all things in the city are made venal.” Furthermore,

commerce is more at odds with military prowess than are most other occupations. Merchants rest in the shade without toil, and while they enjoy delights their spirits grow soft and their bodies are rendered weak and unfitted for military exertions.

This explains why, according to civil law, “knights are forbidden to engage in commerce.” Nevertheless, as it is difficult to find a place “which so abounds in all the things necessary for life that it does not need to have some things brought in from elsewhere,” the author concedes that it is “not . . . fitting to exclude merchants from the city altogether.” Then, almost as an afterthought, he adds that, “when things are especially abundant in the same place, many people suffer loss if they cannot be transported to another place through the activity of merchants.” Hence, he concludes, “it is fitting for the perfect city to practice trade in moderation.”⁴

With its initial condemnation of, followed by a grudging concession toward, the necessity for commerce and foreign exchange, such

³ The unspecified king is usually assumed to be the boy-king Hugh II (1253–1267) or possibly his successor Hugh III (1268–1284), great-grandfather of Philippe de Mézières’ patron, Peter I (1359–1369).

⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Political Writings*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge, 2002), 50–51. Books I and II are attributed to Aquinas, the rest to his disciple, Tolomeo of Lucca. In this text, Aquinas promotes a kind of absolute monarchy, rather than the mixed model of a monarch together with an elected council of aristocrats, as in his other writings. Gilles Grivaud, “Literature,” in *Cyprus: Society and Culture 1191–1374*, ed. Angel Nicolaou-Konnari and Chris Schabel (Leiden, 2005), 247–48.

a treatise is certainly an odd offering to make to the ruler of thirteenth-century Cyprus, where already merchants of many nations—Pisa, Genoa, Marseille, and Venice among them—came to buy local exports (sugar, grain, salt, cotton) and to transship goods (alum, wool, silk, and spices) from Egypt, Syria, or the Seljuk sultanate of Rum.⁵ This essay takes *Decameron* 10.9 and its allusion to *mercantanti cipriani* as a lens through which to examine Cyprus's place in the medieval Mediterranean in the period just preceding the chancellorship of Philippe de Mézières. Drawing from recent work by historians and art historians, it will suggest that, far from the ideal of self-sufficient isolation promoted in *De Regno*, mid-fourteenth-century Cyprus was characterized by its connectivity—not just for its place in the commercial, military, and pilgrimage routes running between Latin Europe and the eastern Mediterranean, but as part of a “zone of intelligibility” that made a (fictional) sultan of Babylon and gentleman of Pavia mutually legible, each to the other.⁶ In this context, my subtitle, “How To Do Things in the Medieval Mediterranean,” has at least a double meaning. On the one hand, it refers to the world represented in the tale itself: if Boccaccio's Mediterranean is a zone of mutual intelligibility, then what are the shared *mentalités* and practices that make Saladin and Messer Torello each legible to the other? At the same time, the question is a meta-critical one: how can we, as scholars trained in “traditional” areas such as French literature, or Italian history, or Byzantine art begin to transcend our “field expertise” (both disciplinary and geographical) in order to make sense of a Mediterranean space of porous boundaries and multiple, transmutable identities?⁷ This essay explores these questions through a snapshot of Lusignan Cyprus's place in the medieval

⁵ Nicholas Coureas, “Economy,” in *Cyprus: Society and Culture 1191–1374*, 103–56.

⁶ My notion of Mediterranean connectivity is taken from Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell's important and influential work, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford, 2000). The concept of a Mediterranean “zone of intelligibility” comes from Brian Catlos, “Accursed, Superior Men: Power and Identity in the Medieval Mediterranean,” presented at the UCLA Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (5 October 2009); I thank Professor Catlos for allowing me to see a copy of his paper.

⁷ On the intersection between literary and Mediterranean Studies, see Sharon Kinoshita, “Medieval Mediterranean Literature,” *PMLA* 124:2 (2009), 600–08 and Sharon Kinoshita, “Locating the Medieval Mediterranean,” in *Locating the Middle Ages: The Spaces & Places of Medieval Culture*, ed. Julian Weiss and Sarah Salih, King's College London Medieval Studies (London, forthcoming).

Mediterranean in the decades just preceding Philippe de Mézières's stint as chancellor.

II

In tale 10.9 of Boccaccio's *Decameron* (c. 1350), set "in the time of Emperor Frederick I" (1152–90), Saladin, sultan of Babylon, sets off with just three servants and two advisors on a secret reconnaissance mission to gauge the West's level of preparedness for the upcoming crusade.⁸ Nearing Pavia in northern Italy, they meet a townsman named Messer Torello, out hunting with his servants, dogs, and falcons. Determined to honor these "noble foreigners" [gentili uomini e stranieri] (769/008), Messer Torello directs them, first to his nearby country villa, then, the next day, to his home in Pavia—in each case overwhelming them with such displays of hospitality and generosity that Saladin is forced to conclude that "if the Christian kings are kings the way this man is a knight, the Sultan of Babylon will find it difficult to resist a single one of them, let alone the number who are preparing to march against him!" (774). In the midst of the visit, a curious Messer Torello dares to ask his anonymous guests who they are. At this, Saladin, who (along with his traveling companions) had been conversing easily in Latin, responds: "We are Cypriot merchants. We're coming from Cyprus and headed to Paris on business" [Noi siamo mercatanti cipriani e di Cipri vegniamo e per nostre bisogne andiamo a Parigi] (771/018). Messer Torello is sceptical: bidding his guests farewell, he says: "I do not know who you are...but...you shall never make me believe that you are merchants" (774). In turn, Saladin replies: "Sir, someday we might have the opportunity to show you some of our merchandise (nostra mercantantia), and in so doing convince you of it" (775/038). Riding on to complete his tour of the West, he eventually returns home to ready his defenses.

Meanwhile, Messer Torello takes the cross. In the ensuing crusade, he is quickly taken prisoner. Pressed into service training hunt-

⁸ Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. Mark Musa and Peter Bondanella (New York, 1982), 768. Hereafter, page references to this translation (occasionally modified) are given in-text, followed (where relevant) by section numbers to the Italian text, cited after the *Decameron Web*, http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/texts/DecShowText.php?myID=nov1009&lang=it.

ing birds, he so excels at the craft that he is appointed the sultan's falconer, becoming known as "Saladin's Christian" [il cristiano dal Saladino] (777/51). Eventually the sultan recognizes his former host and, delighted at the opportunity, at last, to reciprocate the latter's hospitality, dresses him in "regal garments", saying "from now on you must consider yourself, and not me, the master here" (778). Then, summoning his necromancers, Saladin has Messer Torello magically transported back to Pavia, where, posing as "a Saracen sent by the Sultan to the King of France as his ambassador" [un saracino mandato dal soldano al re di Francia ambasciadore] (784/101), he materializes dressed "in Arab clothes" [in abito arabaresco] (784/96) just in time to forestall the remarriage of his wife, who had reluctantly given him up for dead. The two are joyously reunited. Messer Torello lavishly distributes the wealth Saladin had bestowed on him, then sends messengers back to Cairo to inform the sultan of "his happy return home" and to declare himself "Saladin's friend and servant" (786). This happy ending is, the narrator concludes, the couple's reward for "their prompt and cheerful acts of courtesy" (786).

A tale of political espionage transformed into a courtesy contest with a feel good, happily-ever-after ending, tale 10.9 sets into motion numerous themes evoking the complex connectivity of the medieval Mediterranean. Though the crusades provide the pretext and are indispensable to the story's structure and development, any history of military and political conflict between Christians and Muslims is displaced in favor of the heartfelt affection linking the northern Italian knight and the sultan of Babylon. It is no accident that such accounts of princely courtesy and generosity collect around the figure of Saladin. Already in his lifetime (he died in 1193), his name was associated with honorable and chivalric behavior—among Christians, as well as his fellow Muslims.⁹

Beyond our protagonists' courtly cross-confessional camaraderie, however, there is the uncanny symmetry of the two disguises bracketing our tale: the sultan of Babylon posing as a Cypriot merchant

⁹ Saladin figures, for example, in *Decameron* 1.3, a short, parable-like tale whose happy, if theologically ambiguous ending features a *conveniencia*-based assertion of the impossibility of deciding the "truth" among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. For Muslim perceptions of Saladin, see e.g. *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin: al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyya wa'l-Mahasin al-Yusufiyya* by Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, D. S. Richards, ed. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

on his way to Paris on business, and the Lombard burgher passing as “a Saracen sent by the Sultan to the king of France as his ambassador” (784). What these two counterfeit characters share, besides their common destination of Paris, is a charter membership in the Mediterranean zone of intelligibility. Christians and Saracens literally speak the same language; as they near Pavia, “Saladin, his companions, and his servants all knew Latin” [tutti sapevan latino] (770/016) and so have no difficulty understanding or making themselves understood.¹⁰

Separated by religion, “nationality,” and social status, Saladin and Messer Torello nevertheless inhabit a common culture, centered around the values of courtesy, generosity, and hospitality. As the prominent place gifts assume in our story suggests, these values frequently take (literally) material form: the rich robes and fine jackets Messer Torello’s wife bestows on their visitors and the exotic finery in which Messer Torello returns to Pavia reflect a shared appreciation for luxury textiles in an age when fine silks produced in places like Alexandria, Almería, or Constantinople constituted a Mediterranean currency par excellence—bestowed as gifts, offered as tribute, taken as booty, and circulating as merchandise along medieval “paths of portability.”¹¹ In the high Middle Ages, such silks, along with finely carved ivory caskets and panels and rock crystal vases, elaborately inlaid or crafted metal bowls and figurines, and high-end ceramics adorned with a repertoire of motifs representing the princely life (a seated figure flanked by two attendants, musicians, dancers, hunters, wine-bearers) or paired mirror-image human or animal figures, circulated in a wide zone of intelligibility in what Oleg Grabar has called a “shared culture of objects:” the material props of a court culture recognizable across the Mediterranean and well into western and central Asia.¹²

¹⁰ Compare *Decameron* 2:9, in which the wife of a Genoese merchant who lands, cross-dressed, in Alexandria, quickly learns the language well enough to become the sultan’s trusted official.

¹¹ Eva R. Hoffman, “Pathways of Portability: Islamic and Christian Interchange from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century,” *Art History* 24 (2001), 17–50. See Sharon Kinoshita, “Almería Silk and the French Feudal Imaginary: Towards a ‘Material’ History of the Medieval Mediterranean,” in *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings*, ed. E. Jane Burns (New York, 2004), 165–76; David Jacoby, “Silk Crosses the Mediterranean,” *Le vie del Mediterraneo. Idee, uomini, oggetti (secoli XI–XVI)*. *Atti del convegno tenuto a Genova, 1994*, ed. Gabriella Airaldi (Genoa, 1997), 55–79.

¹² Oleg Grabar, “The Shared Culture of Objects,” in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington D.C., 1997), 115–29.

This shared culture of objects was also a culture of shared practices, in which falconry held a central place. Interest in falcons plays a small but critical role in *Decameron* 10.9. Messer Torello first encounters Saladin's party in the woods outside Pavia, where he has gone hunting; later, it is his knowledge of birds that wins him a place first at the sultan's court and subsequently in his affections. These details, I suggest, are not merely incidental, but point to a passion for falconry shared by ruling elites across political and religious divides.¹³ Across Eurasia, powerful princes amassed extensive collections of birds, the more foreign and exotic the better. Those from remote regions (like gyrfalcons from the subarctic taiga) were visible marks of power, and rare birds became staple gifts in diplomatic exchange. Falconers frequently took part in foreign embassies, occasionally even serving as envoys themselves.¹⁴ And in *Decameron* 2.9, the female protagonist fleeing her home in Genoa takes ship with a Catalan captain sailing to Alexandria with some peregrine falcons for the sultan.

Not coincidentally, the mounted falconer is among the most widespread of the motifs in the princely repertoire associated with Grabar's "shared culture of objects." Remarkably stable in basic design, images of a horseman carrying a falcon on an arm extended (usually) behind him proliferate between the tenth and thirteenth centuries in a variety of media (ivory carving, metalwork, ceramics, manuscript images, wall painting, and silk) from Andalusia in the west to Afghanistan in the east.¹⁵ The stability of the imagery contrasts with the volatility

¹³ On the long genealogy of falconry (first attested in Mesopotamia in the seventh century B.C.) in the court cultures of western and central Asia, see Thomas T. Allsen, *The Royal Hunt in Eurasian History* (Philadelphia, 2006), 58–59. Though falconry reached Western Europe in the early centuries of the Common Era, it is surely no coincidence, Allsen notes, that its period of greatest popularity was between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, when Latin Christians "were extensively exposed to the elite fashions of the Muslim world."

¹⁴ Allsen, *The Royal Hunt*, 261–62. In 1290, a Genoese merchant visiting Arghun's court made sure to take a falconer with him to assure a better welcome. See also Nicola di Cosmo, "Mongols and Merchants on the Black Sea Frontier in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Convergences and Conflicts," in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, ed. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden, 2005), 400.

¹⁵ Metalwork examples include a gilded bronze harness piece from Syria or southern Anatolia, a bronze mirror from late Ghaznavid Afghanistan (both late twelfth- or thirteenth-century), and a silver-inlaid copper chest from early thirteenth-century southeastern Turkey. See *Chevaux et cavaliers arabes dans les arts d'Orient et d'Occident. Exposition présentée à l'Institut du monde arabe, Paris du 26 novembre 2002 au 30 mars 2003* (Paris, 2002), 182, 184, 189. For ceramics, see the bowls from twelfth- and thirteenth-century Iran in Oya Pancaroglu, *Perpetual Glory: Medieval Islamic Ceramics*

of the political circumstances in which such arts often flourished—exploited by petty kings and usurpers who bolstered their claims to legitimacy by appropriating a visual repertoire associated with the aura of authority emanating from Baghdad, Córdoba, or Constantinople. Such is the case with two Andalusian ivories produced in the turbulent transition between the last Umayyad caliphs and their Amirid successors: the pyxis of al-Mughira (968), made for Caliph Hisham II's younger brother, and the Pamplona casket (c. 1005), made for the son of Hisham II's chamberlain al-Mansur, who had effectively usurped caliphal power.¹⁶

Falconry and silk come together in an artifact from al-Andalus: the so-called shroud of Saint Lazarus, produced in Almería (or possibly Córdoba) in the early eleventh century.¹⁷ A light blue taffeta embroidered in silk and gold thread, it is decorated with rows of polylobed roundels containing alternating images of a sphinx and a mounted knight, holding a hare in one hand and a falcon in the other. Like the Pamplona casket, the Saint Lazarus silk gestures toward early eleventh-century power politics: legible on the horseman's belt and shield is the name al-Muzaffar, the honorific granted to al-Mansur's son Abd al-Malik after his 1007 victory over Castile.¹⁸ In 1147, it was attested in Autun, France—discovered enveloping the relics of Saint Lazarus when these were translated from a local church to the newly-consecrated cathedral.¹⁹ Like other medieval "Islamic" (and Byzantine) silks, this piece survives precisely because of its reuse in a Latin ecclesiastical context, demonstrating the same easy circulation across the Muslim-

from the Harvey B. Plotnick Collection (Chicago, 2007), catalogue numbers 69 and 96, and *Chevaux et cavaliers arabes*, 188.

¹⁶ Hisham reigned from 976 to 1013, but the real ruler was al-Mansur, followed by his son Abd al-Malik. For a detailed cultural and political reading of the Pamplona casket see Cynthia Robinson, "Love in the Time of *Fitna*: 'Courtliness' and the 'Pamplona' Casket," in *Revisiting al-Andalus: Perspectives on the Material Culture of Islamic Iberia and Beyond*, ed. Glaire D. Anderson and Mariam Rosser-Owen (Leiden, 2007), 99–112.

¹⁷ Today the silk is divided into three pieces, housed in the Musée Rolin in Autun, the Musée historique des Tissus in Lyon (inv. 27.600), and the Musée National du Moyen Âge in Paris (inv. CL 21865), all in France. See *Les Andalousies: de Damas à Cordoue* (Paris, 2000), 136–37.

¹⁸ See Eva Baer, "Le Suaire de Saint-Lazare, An Early Datable Hispano-Islamic Embroidery," *Oriental Art* 3 (1967), 1–14.

¹⁹ "Morceau du suaire de Saint Lazare d'Autun," *Qantara: Patrimoine Méditerranéen, Traversées d'Orient et d'Occident*, http://www.qantara-med.org/qantara4/public/show_document.php?do_id=1035&lang=en (accessed 25 March 2010).

Christian “divide” evidenced in the lavish gift exchanges between Saladin and Messer Torello.²⁰

III

Saladin’s pose as a Cypriot merchant is not a random choice. In the *Decameron*, the recurring figure of the Cypriot merchant anecdotally attests the island’s central role in fourteenth-century Mediterranean commerce. In tale 2.4, Landolfo Rufolo of Ravello (near Amalfi) loses his proverbial shirt in an ill-conceived commercial venture to Cyprus, turning to piracy to recover his losses. In tale 2.7, a Cypriot merchant is the last of lovers the Saracen princess Alatiel (daughter of the sultan of Babylon) takes before being returned to her father; later, she makes up a story of having posed as the daughter of a Cypriot nobleman shipwrecked on her way to Crete to be married.²¹ In Boccaccio’s world, Cyprus is inseparable from Mediterranean connectivity.

This had not always been the case. For most of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Cyprus had been a convenient but secondary way-station to mainland ports such as Acre, the true center of trade where maritime routes from Latin Europe met the land routes coming from Central Asia, the Indian Ocean, and beyond. All this changed in 1291. With the fall of Acre, the last outpost of the erstwhile crusader kingdom of Jerusalem, Syrian and Latin Christian refugees fleeing the Mamluk conquest catapulted the eastward-facing Cypriot port of Famagusta (along with Ayas or Laias in Cilician Armenia) to new prominence.²² Shortly thereafter, drought-induced food shortages afflicting the eastern Mediterranean created an important market for grain imports from Apulia—a trade largely in the hands of Italians

²⁰ Kinoshita, “Almería Silk,” 168–71.

²¹ On mentions of Cyprus in the *Decameron*, see Nicholas Coureas, “Commercial Relations between Cyprus and Florence in the Fourteenth Century,” *Επετηρίδα του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών* 25 (1999), 51. For tale 2.7, see Sharon Kinoshita and Jason Jacobs, “Ports of Call: Boccaccio’s Alatiel in the Medieval Mediterranean,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 37 (2007), 163–95.

²² Thus geography was less decisive than “political and economic circumstances [in] determining the island’s evolving role in Mediterranean trade and shipping,” David Jacoby, “The Venetians in Byzantine and Lusignan Cyprus: Trade, Settlement, and Politics,” in *La Serenissima and La Nobilissima: Venice in Cyprus and Cyprus in Venice*, ed. Angel Nicolaou-Konnari (Nicosia, 2009), 59.

and other foreigners.²³ By the turn of the fourteenth century, merchants, bankers, and ship owners from Genoa, Pisa, Venice, Florence, Piacenza, Ancona, Padua, Barcelona, and Provence were doing a thriving business on the island.²⁴ Cyprus-based merchants prospered: Kings Henry II and Hugh IV were “somewhat selective” in implementing the papal blockade on trade with Mamluk lands, and in any case Greek Cypriot and Arabic-speaking Syrian Christians were not bound by the papal injunction. Famagusta, previously involved only in local or middle-distance regional trade, now became a port-of-call on the long-distance route between Venice and Laiazzo, Latin Europe’s premier entrepôt in the eastern Mediterranean.²⁵ The German traveler Ludolf of Súdheim, who visited Cyprus in the late 1330s or early 1340s, wrote that “all ships and all wares, . . . come from what part of the sea they will, must . . . come first to Cyprus, [as must] pilgrims from every country journeying to the lands over sea.” As a result, everyday from dawn to dusk, one could hear “rumors and news” of all kinds, spoken in “the tongues of every nation under heaven.”²⁶ For Boccaccio’s purposes, this meant that the label “Cypriot merchant” was deliciously vague. With its Francophone kings, majoritarian Greek-speaking population, Italian merchant colonies, and Arabic-speaking Levantine Christian communities (not to mention visiting Provençal and Catalan merchants), Lusignan Cyprus was a multilingual, multiethnic, multi-confessional place. If, for Thomas Aquinas, “continual contact with foreigners” was a danger, nowhere would that danger have been harder to avoid than in Lusignan Cyprus. In an age when merchants from one city commonly posed as citizens of another to gain protection or trade privileges in foreign ports, it is no wonder that “Cypriot merchant”—

²³ Coureas, “Commercial Relations”, 52.

²⁴ Among the commodities they trafficked were slaves, of remarkable ethnic diversity: primarily Greek, Turkish, or “Saracen,” but also Mongol, Cuman, Russian, Hungarian, Circassian, and even a black slave from Spain. Steven A. Epstein, *Purity Lost: Transgressing Boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1000–1400* (Baltimore, 2006), 88–89.

²⁵ Jacoby, “The Venetians in Cyprus,” 67.

²⁶ *Excerpta Cypria: Materials for a History of Cyprus*, ed. and trans. Claude Delaval Cobham (Cambridge, 1908), 20. Some of the island’s linguistic complexity is reflected in the synod convened by Elias of Nabinaux, archbishop of Nicosia (and future Latin patriarch of Jerusalem) in 1340, with mendicant friars, other clergymen, and even a knight serving as translators for an assembly of local Greeks, Maronites, Jacobites, Nestorians, and Armenians; see Christopher Schabel, “Elias of Nabinaux, Archbishop of Nicosia, and the Intellectual History of Later Medieval Cyprus,” *Cahiers de l’Institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 68 (1998), 50–52.

an invitation to indeterminacy—serves as a plausible disguise for a Latin-speaking sultan of Babylon.²⁷

In the first half of the fourteenth century, then, Cyprus's prosperity was inseparable from its commercial relationships (however clandestine) with Mamluk Egypt and Syria. What this history means, I suggest, is that any tendency to read the island as the last remaining western outpost of crusade needs to be balanced with an understanding of the way its kings negotiated its role as a multilingual, multi-confessional entrepôt, key node in eastern Mediterranean networks of connectivity.²⁸ Nowhere is this Mediterranean context more evident than in the Lusignans' fourteenth-century dynastic alliances. Previously, they were closely intertwined with the rulers of Cilician Armenia and prominent Latin families of Outremer. In the fourteenth century, however, Henry II turned to the royal house of Aragon (which was expanding its own influence in the eastern Mediterranean following its acquisition of Sicily in the wake of the Vespers of 1282).²⁹ Decades later, his successor Hugh IV (whose own two wives were from the Latin house of Ibelin) sought Aragonese marriages for three of his children, clearly recognizing the advantages of an alliance with a family with "so wide a nexus of power and influence" and that "shared the Lusignans' antipathy to the Angevin kings of Naples and to the Genoese."³⁰ It is surely no coincidence that another thing the Lusignans and Aragonese shared was a pragmatic attitude towards diplomatic and commercial relations with the Mamluk sultans of Egypt.³¹ In this light, it is worth

²⁷ Note that 1350, the approximate date of Boccaccio's post-plague *Decameron*, coincides with the end of the century of exceptional Eurasian connectivity described by Janet L. Abu-Lughod in *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York, 1989).

²⁸ On the complexity of Mediterranean networks, see Damien Coulon and Dominique Valérian, "Introduction," in *Espaces et Réseaux en Méditerranée VI^e–XVI^e siècle*, 3 vols., ed. Damien Coulon, Christophe Picard, and Dominique Valérian (Paris, 2007), 1.

²⁹ In 1315, the childless Henry II gave his sister Maria in marriage to James II of Aragon, promising that she and her children would inherit the Cypriot throne after his death; two years later, he married James's niece, Constance of Sicily; see Peter W. Edbury, "Franks," in *Cyprus: Society and Culture 1191–1374*, 72.

³⁰ Hugh married his daughter Eschiva to Ferrand (younger brother of James II of Majorca) in 1340; his son John to the twice-widowed Constance (daughter of Frederick III of Sicily and former wife of Henry II) in 1342; and his son, the future Peter I, to Eleanor of Ribargoza in 1353. See Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), 144–46.

³¹ James II, in particular, carried on active diplomatic relations with Egypt, proposing in 1292 to side with the sultan against the pope, assuming the role of protector of

revisiting Cyprus's Mediterranean culture in the reign of Peter I's predecessor, Hugh IV.

IV

Hugh IV came to the throne in 1324 on the death of his childless uncle, Henry II. Though he was quickly acclaimed king by the vassals of the high court, his succession was not without controversy: his hasty coronation (in Nicosia) as king of Cyprus and (in Famagusta) as king of Jerusalem bespoke the need to forestall counterclaims by Hugh's middle-aged aunts, Alice and Helvis.³² During Hugh's thirty-five year reign (1324–1359), Cyprus's prosperity fueled a cultural renaissance, most visibly in grand architectural projects such as the cathedrals of Santa Sophia in Nicosia (dedicated 1326) and Saint Nicholas in Famagusta, the abbey of Bellapais, and the church of Saint Catherine (also in Nicosia).³³ Since the cathedrals were used as coronation churches, it would be easy to read their "unequivocally Gothic" style as an assertion of western cultural hegemony over this eastern Mediterranean French colony. Recent research, however, has focused on the complexity of Cypriot Gothic—a "polyglot" style choreographing influences from the Crusader states, Cilician Armenia, Byzantium and even Catalonia alongside those of metropolitan France.³⁴

In Hugh's reign, Cyprus became something of a cultural as well as a commercial crossroads. The Byzantine polymath Nicephoros Gregoras, in his treatise *On Kingship*, praised Hugh as a patron of learning; at his court one found "many learned Latins" (including a Spanish Dominican translating Arabic and Coptic works into Latin), the Greek scholar George Lapithes translating a Latin astronomical

all Christians under Mamluk rule, and bargaining for the relics of Christian saints—all in the context of trade concessions for Catalan merchants. Eliyahu Ashtor, "The Crisis of Levant Trade (1291–1344)," in *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1983), 21, 34.

³² Another potential contender was his cousin Guy, son of the erstwhile rebel, Amaury of Tyre. See Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 141–43.

³³ Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Art in the Court of the Lusignan Kings," in *Cyprus and the Crusades. Papers Given at the International Conference, Nicosia, 6–9 September, 1994*, ed. Nicholas Coureas and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Nicosia, 1995), 244–45.

³⁴ See Carr, "Art in the Court of the Lusignan Kings," 239–40, and Justine M. Andrews, "Santa Sophia in Nicosia: The Sculpture of the Western Portals and Its Reception," *Comitatus* 30 (1999), 63–90.

treatise into Greek, and “Egyptian Arabs [who] made the journey across the sea to the king for scientific discourse as well as for ambition.”³⁵ This image of Hugh as sponsor of the cultivation and circulation of Greek and Arabic scientific traditions conforms to a recognizable type in the culture of shared practices: rulers who deployed intellectual and artistic patronage as an assertion of political and dynastic power. Earlier Latin Christian examples include the Norman king Roger II of Sicily, dedicatee of al-Idrisi’s geographical text, the *Book of Roger* [*Kitab Rujar*]; Alfonso X “the Wise” of Castile, whose program of Arabic-to-Castilian translations forged a scientific and philosophical culture in the Romance vernacular; and the Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick II, that early thirteenth-century *stupor mundi* who (like his grandfather, Roger II of Sicily) knew how to do things in the medieval Mediterranean.³⁶

The book most closely associated with Frederick, however, is not a translation at all but an original composition: his *De arte venandi cum avibus*, the most celebrated falconry treatise of the Latin Middle Ages, compiled at the behest of his son Manfred between c. 1230 and 1245. Falconry was the emperor’s passion; surviving imperial registers show him corresponding with individual falconers throughout his realm, inquiring after the health or training of special birds he has sent them.³⁷ Most fetchingly, when a message from Genghis Khan’s grandson Batu, khan of the Golden Horde, demanded that Frederick surrender his empire in exchange for a position at the Mongol court, the emperor is reputed to have joked that “with his experience he was well qualified for the post of the khan’s falconer”—an anecdote that nicely anticipates our tale of Messer Torello.³⁸ Previously, Frederick had commissioned his court physician, Theodore of Antioch, to translate an Arabic falconry treatise into Latin (making additions and corrections himself). In *De arte venandi cum avibus*, on the other hand,

³⁵ David Pingree, “The Byzantine Version of the ‘Toledan Tables’: The Work of George Lapithes?” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 30 (1976), 88–89.

³⁶ Sharon Kinoshita, “Translatio/n, Empire, and the Worlding of Medieval Literature: The Travels of *Kalila wa Dimna*,” *Postcolonial Studies* 11 (2008), 371–85. The most salient model was the translation movement of the late eighth and ninth centuries, when the Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad launched an unprecedented program of *translatio studii* into Arabic out of Persian as well as ancient Greek.

³⁷ Registers survive only from 1239–40. Charles H. Haskins, “The ‘De Arte Venandi cum Avibus’ of the Emperor Frederick II,” *English Historical Review* 36 (1921), 354.

³⁸ Albericus Trium Fontium, MGH, SS, XXIII, 943, cited in Haskins, “The ‘De Arte Venandi,’” 355.

he drew on a lifetime's worth of personal experience and practical observation to assemble what Baudouin van den Abeele, the foremost modern expert on medieval falconry, describes as a "monumental work" of "profound originality," exceptional in every way: in size, detail, the precision of vocabulary and style, and critical spirit.³⁹ Six manuscripts of this original version are extant, while a "second edition" with Manfred's revisions survives in a lavishly illustrated Latin manuscript, Vatican Pal. lat. 1070.⁴⁰

Later European falconry treatises drew liberally on Theodore of Antioch's Latin translation; no subsequent authors, in contrast, used *De arte venandi cum avibus* as a source.⁴¹ This fact—inexplicable from the standpoint of the exceptional quality of the information supplied in the two texts—becomes legible only in light of the Mediterranean culture of shared practices. Frederick's long and turbulent reign had been characterized by his ongoing struggles with the papacy and punctuated by excommunications; following his death in 1250, his heirs Conrad IV, Manfred, and Conradin were each in turn defeated or killed by papal allies, and, in 1266, their Sicilian kingdom conquered by Charles of Anjou, youngest brother of French king Louis IX. Seen from the perspective of medieval power politics, Frederick—and his text—were examples *not* to be emulated. By consigning *De arte venandi* (with an important exception, discussed below) to textual oblivion, Latin Europe signaled its contempt for the emperor and his opportunistic Mediterranean politics.

In the mid-thirteenth century, commissions of manuscripts and translations began serving as sites of political-dynastic struggle. In 1253, two years after Alfonso X of Castile's translation of the Arabic frame-tale collection *Kalila wa Dimna*, his younger brother Fadrique produced the *Libro de los engaños*, a Castilian translation of the eastern branch of the *Sendebär*—"a veritable battle of stories" ultimately vindicating a falsely accused prince (diffused in its western branch as

³⁹ Charles H. Haskins, "Some Early Treatises on Falconry," *Romanic Review* 13 (1922), 22.

⁴⁰ Baudouin van den Abeele, *La Fauconnerie au Moyen Age: Connaissance, affaitage et médecine des oiseaux de chasse d'après les traités latins* (Paris, 1994), 26–27. For a facsimile edition, see Carl Arnold Willemsen, *De arte venandi cum avibus: Ms. Pal. Lat. 1071, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* (Graz, 1969). An Old French translation was later commissioned by the emperor's favorite (illegitimate) son, Enzo—nicknamed "il Falconello." Haskins, "The 'De Arte Venandi,'" 349.

⁴¹ Van den Abeele, *La Fauconnerie au Moyen Age*, 26–27.

Seven Sages of Rome). Fadrique later rebelled against the king and was executed; surely not coincidentally, his translation bore no literary progeny—its fate sealed, as it were, by that of its patron-translator.⁴² In the meantime, Charles of Anjou had become king of Sicily by papal investiture (1265), followed by his defeat of Manfred at the battle of Benevento (1266). Even as he imposed a “foreign” regime stringent enough to trigger the Sicilian Vespers of 1282, Charles made at least one gesture intended to resonate in the Mediterranean zone of intelligibility. As if to present himself as a patron of Arabophone science in the mold of his predecessors Roger and Frederick II, he commissioned a Latin translation of a copy of al-Razi’s *Comprehensive Book of Medicine* [*Kitab al-Hawi fi al-Tibb*] purportedly given him as a gift from the Hafsid ruler of Tunis, Mustansir Billah.⁴³ At about the same time, one of Charles’s northern allies—perhaps his son-in-law Robert of Béthune, future count of Flanders—commissioned a lavish manuscript of the vernacular French *Histoire ancienne jusqu’à César* (Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 726) from the same southern Italian atelier previously patronized by the Hohenstaufens.⁴⁴ In the visual language of empire, there was no clearer way of proclaiming the legitimacy of Angevin rule in Sicily and announcing Charles’s imperial ambitions in the eastern Mediterranean.

Such a context goes a long way in explaining the fate of Frederick’s *De Arte Venandi cum Avibus*. In the early fourteenth century (c. 1310), Manfred’s augmented copy of *De Arte* was translated into French for John of Dampierre and his wife, Isabelle of Brienne. (John was the cousin of Robert of Béthune; art historian Hélène Toubert speculates that it may have been Robert, with his strong Angevin

⁴² On *Sendebār*, see Jerrilynn D. Dodds, María Rosa Menocal, and Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (New Haven, 2008), 235, 238. In contrast, Alfonso’s *Calila e Digna* was subsequently translated into Latin at the court of the French king Philip IV. See Kinoshita, “Translatio/n, Empire, and the Worlding of Medieval Literature,” 371–72, 377–78.

⁴³ This corrects the identification made in Kinoshita, “Translatio/n,” 378–79.

⁴⁴ Rebecca W. Corrie, “Angevin Ambitions: The Conradin Bible Atelier and a Neapolitan Localization for Chantilly’s *Histoire ancienne jusqu’à César*,” in *France and the Holy Land: Frankish Culture at the End of the Crusades*, ed. Daniel H. Weiss and Lisa Mahoney (Baltimore, 2004), 242–43. On the political motivations behind the original composition of the *Histoire ancienne*, see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley, 1993).

connections, who transmitted Manfred's copy to northern France.)⁴⁵ The resulting manuscript, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 12400, presents a fascinating example of literary-political appropriation. The frontispiece represents a figure clearly identified as John of Dampierre commissioning the manuscript from a translator and scribe. Then, though the main iconographic program closely copies that of Vatican City, Bibliotheca Palatina latin 1070, representations of Frederick II and Manfred in the original are pointedly replaced by portraits of John and his son William. At the exact midpoint of the manuscript, an image of the veronica—the holy face of Christ—calls attention to a puzzle that relates, in word and image, how John, “pilgrim and crusader, received *De arte venandi* and had it translated for his son Guillaume” (872–73). Furthermore, an illustration alongside Frederick's description of the fear falcons experience at the sight of a human face shows a figure wearing a headdress often used to visually mark Jews or Saracens, or associated with demons in scenes of martyrdoms or the Passion. Where Toubert interprets such modifications to the visual program as an indication of the illustrator's careful attention to the text, in this case it may also, I think, score political points by suggesting Frederick's demonic associations, or at least recalling his propensity for engaging with “Saracens.” The “volonté de manifester l'appropriation d'une oeuvre prestigieuse” evidenced in BnF fr. 12400 demonstrates the important role books—especially, perhaps, those on falconry—could play in the force-field of Mediterranean politics.⁴⁶

This brings us back to Lusignan Cyprus. From a mid-fifteenth-century *Art of Falconry*, we learn of at least two prior texts apparently composed during the reign of Peter I.⁴⁷ French Hospitaler Jean de Fransières, who compiled his treatise during a stay at his order's

⁴⁵ Isabelle was a relative (and namesake) of Frederick II's second wife, Isabelle (Yolande) of Jerusalem. Hélène Toubert, “La Copie française du *De Arte Venandi cum Avibus*. Fidélité et innovation,” in *Arte d'Occidente: temi e metodi. Studi in onore di Angiola Maria Romanini*, 3 vols., ed. Antonio Cadei (Rome, 1999), 2:871–77.

⁴⁶ Toubert, “La Copie française,” 877, citing (on the headdress) Ruth Mellinkoff, “Demonic Winged Headgear,” *Viator* 16 (1985), 378.

⁴⁷ Falconry was prized in Cyprus, as elsewhere in the Mediterranean. In his account of the civil wars of 1229–33, Philip of Novara recounts that many knights abandoned the siege of St Hilarion castle to return to their estates to go hawking; see Edbury, “Franks,” in *Cyprus: Society and Culture 1191–1374*, 63–101 (at 83). In Hugh IV's Assizes of 1355, the reward for restoring a lost falcon to its rightful owner was set at two bezants—compared to one for an *espervier* or a hunting dog and three for a pack horse (*ronssin*) or an adult female slave. John of Ibelin, *Le Livre des Assises*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Leiden, 2003), 795–96.

headquarters on Rhodes, describes drawing on three different source texts. “The first, Master Molopin, was in his day falconer to the prince of Antioch, the king of Cyprus’s brother. The second expert was called Master Michelin; in his day, he was falconer to the king of Cyprus” [Le premier oult nom maister Molopin et fut en son temps faulconnier du prince d’Antioche, frere jadiz du roy de Chyppe. Le second mais-tre oult nom maistre Michelin. Cestui fut tout son temps faulconnier du roy de Chypre].⁴⁸ The “king of Cyprus” and “prince of Antioch” have been identified as Peter I (Philippe de Mézières’s patron) and his brother John, respectively.⁴⁹ As for the authors, historian Jean Richard, who posits that all three treatises were composed in French, conjectures Molopin was a Syrian (or Chaldean or Melkite) Christian and Michelin most likely Greek.⁵⁰ For our purposes, this royal sponsorship of texts on falconry, composed in French but likely drawing or translating from Greek and Arabic sources, fleshes out Nicephoros Gregoras’s account of the cultural commerce at the Lusignan court while simultaneously gesturing toward the larger context of literary patronage in the medieval Mediterranean.

Finally, the Mediterranean culture of shared objects and practices also helps account for the so-called “basin of Hugh IV” (Paris, Louvre, MAO 101), one of a “distinct group” of large, elaborately decorated inlaid brass basins produced, probably in Mamluk Damascus, between 1325 and 1360. (These include two dedicated to the long-reigning, twice-deposed sultan, al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun, along with the celebrated “baptistère de Saint Louis.”)⁵¹ In place of

⁴⁸ The third was Master Aimé Cassian, a Greek from Rhodes who was falconer to the Grand Masters of the Hospital. Rolf Wistedt, *Le livre de fauconnerie de Jean de Fransières. L’auteur et ses sources*, Filologiskt Arkiv 11 (Stockholm, 1967), 21. Jean served as bailli of Morea from c. 1463.

⁴⁹ Wistedt, *Le livre de fauconnerie*, 22, 25. The suspicion that John of Antioch may have been involved in Peter’s 1369 assassination also evokes the fratricidal rivalry of the Castilian brothers Alfonso X and Fadrique. See Peter Edbury, “The Murder of King Peter I of Cyprus (1359–1369),” *Journal of Medieval History* 6 (1980), 219–33.

⁵⁰ Jean Richard, “La Fauconnerie de Jean de Fransières et ses sources,” *Le Moyen Age* 69 (1963), 898–99, 901. Richard also thinks the “king of Cyprus” may be Peter I and John’s younger brother, James I (ruled 1382–1398), or even Janus (1398–1432) or James II. “La Fauconnerie de Jean de Fransières,” 899.

⁵¹ Rachel Ward, “The ‘Baptistère de Saint Louis’—A Mamluk Basin Made for Export to Europe,” in *Islam and the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Charles Burnett and Anna Contadini (London, 1999), 113–31. For an image of the basin of Hugh IV, see Sophie Makariou, “Bassin au nom d’Hugues de Lusignan, roi de Chypre,” http://www.louvre.fr/llv/oeuvres/detail_notice.jsp?CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225863&CURRENT_LLIVV_NOTICE%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225863&FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=98

the Mamluk names and titlature typically found on such vessels, the inscription (in Arabic) on Hugh's basin proclaims: "Of what was made for the most high Excellency, the splendid, noble Eminence Hugh, who has received the favors (of God), who rises in the van of the *élite*-troops of the Frankish kings, Hugh de Lusignan, may his power endure."⁵² While the "admirably proportioned and beautifully balanced Arabic script" indicates "a high degree of calligraphic proficiency," the basin is unlikely to have been commissioned by the sultan or other Mamluk official as (for example) a diplomatic gift. Rather, the inscriptions—difficult to translate, employing formulas different from those in any other Mamluk sources—"seem to have been composed for the occasion."⁵³ On the inside rim of the basin, a second inscription in Gothic lettering (presumably a later addition) reads: "Très haut et puissant roi Hugue de Jherusalem et de Chipre que Dieu manteigne" [God keep the most high and mighty king, Hugh of Jerusalem and Cyprus]. Also added later were Hugh's heraldic devices—the lion rampant of Cyprus and the cross of Jerusalem appearing in roundels on the interior and exterior of the basin.⁵⁴ Aimed at a mixed audience and understood in the context of a "pan-Mediterranean court culture within which these vessels were acknowledged as symbols of power," Hugh's basin was, as James Schryver puts it, a "political statement" asserting Lusignan Cyprus's entrance onto the contemporary eastern Mediterranean scene as "an equal player," its French inscription intended "for those within the French and non-Mediterranean,

52723696500831&fromDept=false&baseIndex=16 (accessed 13 March 2010). See also the copper-alloy inlaid tray more tentatively associated with the Lusignans through the (incomplete) heraldic device of the lion rampant. Sophie Makariou, "Plateau à bord droit aux armes des Lusignan de Chypre" (Louvre MAO 1227).

⁵² D. S. Rice, "Arabic Inscriptions on a Brass Basin Made for Hugh IV Lusignan," *Studi Orientalistici in onore di Giorgio Levi della Vida* (Rome, 1956), 397.

⁵³ This is "the only known Islamic metal vessel with the name and titles of a non-Muslim ruler." When referring to Christian rulers of formerly Muslim lands, Mamluk administrative manuals prescribe the use of the term "occupier" (*mujtamallik*) rather than "king" (*malik*). Rice, "Arabic Inscriptions on a Brass Basin," 401–02.

⁵⁴ Ward, "The 'Baptistère de Saint Louis,'" 120. Against earlier consensus, Ward argues that such basins were "made for export," not commissioned by the Mamluks themselves as (for example) diplomatic gifts. And although Ward does not make this connection, her description of a lion rampant on an exterior roundel of the baptistère de Saint Louis, along with figures whose features and headwear resemble those of an early fourteenth-century Cypriot donor portrait, perhaps suggest a Lusignan connection for this vessel as well. Ward, "The 'Baptistère de Saint Louis,'" 116, 118.

Western courts who needed to have the message...‘translated’ for them.”⁵⁵

Under Peter I, it is harder to imagine a Mamluk-style basin proclaiming the king’s greatness, in Arabic, to a pan-Mediterranean court culture of shared objects and practices. From his founding of the Order of the Sword (one of those elite fourteenth-century orders of chivalry, the best known of which is Edward III’s Order of the Garter) to his commemoration in Guillaume de Machaut’s *La Prise d’Alexandrie*, Peter pursued a more distinctly western style of kingship—a style that included the roles he allotted Peter Thomas and Philippe de Mézières. In part, this reflected the turn of historical circumstances: the lifting of the papal trade embargo in the mid-1340s meant that, by the end of Hugh’s reign, Latin merchants were increasingly bypassing Cyprus to sail directly to Alexandria. The combination of historical forces and, undoubtedly, the king’s personal temperament made the tone of Peter’s reign recognizably different from that of his father, Hugh IV.

CONCLUSIONS

Historical legacies are by nature susceptible to revision and appropriation. At the 1931 Exposition coloniale in Paris, the basin of Hugh IV was displayed in the Salle des croisades alongside such items as the sword of Godefroy de Bouillon, a model of Krak des Chevaliers (the Syrian fortress belonging to the Knights Hospital), and an olifant “de fabrication sarrazine”, while an “Hugues de Lusignan” figured among the eight medieval names in a long list of French colonizers proudly inscribed on the side of the Musée des Colonies.⁵⁶ In the age of French colonial expansion, Lusignan Cyprus and its artifacts were interpellated as reminders of a key episode in France’s great history of overseas adventures. In our postcolonial moment, on the other hand,

⁵⁵ James G. Schryver, “Monuments of Identity: Latin, Greek, Frank and Cypriot,” in *Identités croisées en un milieu méditerranéen: le cas de Chypre (Antiquité-Moyen Age)*, ed. Sabine Fourrier and Gilles Grivaud (Rouen, 2006), 387–88. At the same time, Schryver’s distinction between *cultural* monuments “reflective of the internal socio-cultural conditions on the island,” and *political* ones, “reflective of external political realities” (ibid., 387–88), seems to me unduly artificial.

⁵⁶ Michelle R. Warren, “How the Indian Ocean Made Medieval France,” *Australian Journal of French Studies* 46 (2009), 254–56, drawing on Marcel Olivier, *Exposition coloniale internationale et des pays d’outre-mer, Paris 1931: rapport général* (Paris, 1932–33), vol. 5, part 1, 117–55.

artifacts as varied as Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the cathedral of Santa Sophia of Nicosia, and the basin of Hugh IV can be more readily separated from previous disciplinary or ideological moorings, allowing us to tell a different tale of how certain people once did things in the medieval Mediterranean.

PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT

Michael Hanly

The papers here assembled on the long career of Philippe de Mézières display an astonishing scope and variety, revealing Philippe's essential contributions to the diplomacy, letters, military practice, interfaith relations, and liturgy of the age. From the 1350s through the '90s, the Chancellor of Cyprus was the driving force behind Western ambitions in the Middle East, and the travels he undertook in the obsessive pursuit of these goals made him familiar at nearly every major princely and ecclesiastical court, and put his fingerprints on most of the important political events in the second half of the fourteenth century. Philippe is clearly one of the most significant figures on the international political stage in his time.

As a literary historian, however, I believe Philippe's influence transcends even this consensus regarding his fundamental position in late-medieval statecraft. I see him as a crucial figure, as well, in the intellectual history of the later Middle Ages, a potential transmitter of culture in a westward diffusion of Italian texts and themes. This volume offers new insights on the military and political significance of the figures involved in Philippe's Order of the Passion. This essay involves a review of the political activities of several "courtier-poets" and a comparative study of their literary works, texts contemporary with Philippe's major productions and composed in the context of what we can call, rather anachronistically, the "peace movement" of the last decades of the fourteenth century. I define "peace movement" broadly, as a coalition of French and English writers and diplomats who opposed their countries' wars on grounds both philosophical and pragmatic.

My research into the movements of French and English emissaries during this era suggests a pattern of connectedness between the two countries that counteracts the great political divisions of the period. I am also persuaded that their international connections diffused the themes and texts of Italian humanism westward across the Alps at least a generation before this was believed to have occurred. An analysis of the career and works of Geoffrey Chaucer, himself a court official

and diplomat, led me to this conclusion. I mean to mention Chaucer now in the service of a polemical point, and then to drop him unceremoniously, only to return to him briefly near the end of this paper. For Philippe de Mézières, and not Chaucer, is the center of the cultural system I envision. The Englishman is instead a figure on the outskirts of the system, and a beneficiary of the professional work of more itinerant contemporaries.¹

In a time when few people in England spoke Italian or possessed Italian-language books, Chaucer acquired and imitated vernacular poems by Boccaccio, Dante, and Petrarch. There is no doubt that he had access to Italian poetic manuscripts, at least to copies of *Il Filostrato* and *La Teseida*. What is more, he was competent enough in the Italian language to be able to make sense of these manuscripts as he composed original works in English. A consideration of his contemporary political and cultural conditions leads modern scholars to deem Chaucer's activity extraordinary, and has engendered a number of varying explanations for this prodigy. According to some, Chaucer's Italian was excellent, and his acquisition of the manuscripts a simple consequence of his service to the English crown at Italian courts. Others, however, question his fluency in Italian, doubt that a middling functionary would have much chance to acquire expensive copies of Boccaccio's poems during working trips in Italy, and accept the probability that the poet used French translations of foreign texts whenever they were available.

Chaucer's possession of Italian manuscripts, therefore, cannot be denied, but questions remain regarding how he got his hands on them, and how well he could understand them on his own. I do not intend to revisit these arguments here, and will say simply that if our esteem for Chaucer's work leads us to consider him a linguistic anomaly, we might be led to reject his use of available French translations in dealing with third-language texts. Such a judgment would run counter to what we already know: that English writers quite often made use of French translations in this time, Chaucer among them. My aim is not to consider these poets outside of their socio-historical context, but rather to examine the role of that context in making their poetry possible.

¹ I draw here upon material published previously in my "Courtiers and Poets: An International Network of Literary Exchange," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 28 (1997).

Some of Chaucer's most significant works derive from Italian originals, with French translations serving as intermediaries. Extrapolating a political model from this linguistic pattern—Italian into French into English—I find it useful to conjecture a conduit for the transmission of Italian works in the secular and ecclesiastical courts of the three countries. This structure would lead us to consider these courts, already known to be centers of artistic production, as sites of literary exchange. Extant catalogues of the books assembled in King Charles V's Louvre library during the third quarter of the century display a fascination with foreign texts, and the movement of Italian literature into France certainly would have been expedited by the extensive political connections between Paris and other known artistic centers such as the Papal Court at Avignon, the court of Naples, and the duchy of Anjou. I have been collecting information regarding a number of late-fourteenth-century court officials whose assignments made them familiar to all of these courts, and whom I believe to have participated in this process of transmission. The paths traced by these knights and clerics in diplomatic assignments, scrutinized in conjunction with their literary productions and philosophical interests, recommend them as agents of the transmission of Italian works into France, where these texts would have been translated and made available to English poets. Their individual careers provide the first elements for sketching a system of artistic transmission, a network that can explain much about how Europe's political entities interacted with each other during one of the most dangerous episodes in its history. The most significant of these figures, of course, is Philippe de Mézières, renowned as "the chief literary propagandist of the crusade in the Latin West"² and a man "at the center of politics in his times,"³ foremost among the intermediaries between the French and English courts in the 1380s and 1390s. Much has been said about his long career and his fanatical absorption with crusade; I will focus here only on the supra-national experience and literary interests that recommend him and his network of political associates as a "transmitter" of culture.

² Maurice Keen, "Chaucer's Knight, the English Aristocracy and the Crusade," in V. J. Scattergood and J. W. Sherborne, eds., *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1983), 57.

³ Tomaz Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order* (Berkeley, 2002), 333.

Before he was twenty-one, Philippe had made official contacts at the courts of Milan, Naples, and Cyprus; he then spent several years in the Eastern Mediterranean, at which time he conceived his goal of reclaiming Jerusalem for Christianity.⁴ As Chancellor of Cyprus, he crisscrossed Europe with Peter of Lusignan (1359–1369) in the early 1360s, attempting to garner support from various aristocratic and ecclesiastical courts for the Alexandria campaign, an episode celebrated by Guillaume de Machaut in his *Prise d’Alexandrie*⁵ and mentioned in Chaucer’s description of the Knight in the General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*.⁶ Indeed, several of Peter of Lusignan’s other crusading campaigns are mentioned in the Knight’s General Prologue portrait, details which lead some scholars to infer Chaucer’s sympathy several decades later with the crusading ideals espoused by the court of Cyprus.

While in the service of the Kingdom of Cyprus during the 1360s, Philippe made frequent missions to Venice in promoting crusade, and some time before the sack of Alexandria, perhaps between December 1361 and March 1363 when he was primarily in Venice, he must have met Francesco Petrarca.⁷ His acquaintance with the poet laureate, a figure known to and imitated by the Englishman Chaucer, provides a crucial link in this putative network of transmission. Chaucer based his tale of the Clerk in his *Canterbury Tales* on Petrarch’s Latin

⁴ The life of Philippe de Mézières has inspired one monograph-length biography by Nicolae Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405) et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896; repr. London, 1973) and a number of briefer discussions in editions of his works, most notably that of Philippe Contamine and Jacques Paviot in their recent edition, *Une épître lamentable et consolatoire adressée en 1397 à Philippe le Hardi, duc de Bourgogne, sur la défaite de Nicopolis (1396)* (Paris, 2008), 11–45; a shorter summary appears in Joël Blanchard’s new translation of the *Songe du vieil pèlerin*; see Philippe de Mézières, *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008), 7–24. The details presented here are drawn mainly from Jorga.

⁵ *La Prise d’Alexandrie ou Chronique du roi Pierre Ier de Lusignan par Guillaume de Machaut*, ed. L. de Mas Latrie (Geneva, 1877).

⁶ General Prologue, 1.51: “At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne.” Two more of Lusignan’s battles are named as part of the Knight’s portfolio in line 58, “Lyeys” (Ayash in Armenia, 1367) and “Satalye” (Antalya in Anatolia, 1361). All citations of Chaucer are from Larry Benson, et al., eds., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edition (Boston, 1987).

⁷ Philippe was made a citizen of the Venetian Republic on June 22, 1365, according to a document published by Mas Latrie, *Bibliothèque de l’École des Chartes* 34 (1873), 74–77, and cited in Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 324. Ernest H. Wilkins, *Life of Petrarch* (Chicago, 1961), 193, suggests the meeting with Petrarch. See also Pierre de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l’humanisme*, 2 vols. (2nd ed., Paris, 1907), 1: 66–67, who intimates an intellectual partnership based on Petrarch’s reputation as a bibliophile.

Historia Griseldis, and is known to have used an anonymous French *Livre Griseldis*—itself drawn from Philippe’s French translation of Petrarch—as he worked with the Latin original.⁸ Philippe, for his part, mentions Petrarch in a literary work composed twenty years after their encounter, while introducing his French translation of Petrarch’s *Griselda* story: in the *Livre sur la vertu du sacrement de mariage* he refers to “maistre Fransoys Patrac, jadis son especial ami.”⁹ Direct evidence of their contact is contained in a Latin letter Petrarch addressed to Philippe in November 1369, eleven months after the assassination of Peter of Lusignan.¹⁰ Beginning *Fontem lachrymarum*, the epistle mourns the untimely death of their mutual friend “Jacobus,” a soldier whose virtuous attributes bear striking resemblance to key elements of Mézières’ program for the reform of Western chivalry via the Order of the Passion.¹¹ Petrarch’s impassioned account of the aftermath of Alexandria indicates his knowledge of and enthusiasm for Mézières’ ideals. He refers, finally, to the deceased Jacobus as “our brother,” suggesting a friendship with the Chancellor of Cyprus as intimate as that claimed by Philippe in the *Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*. The letter displays an amicable and respectful connection between the

⁸ J. Burke Severs, “Chaucer’s Source Manuscripts for the ‘Clerkes Tale,’” *PMLA* 47 (1932), 431–52, and *The Literary Relationships of Chaucer’s “Clerkes Tale,”* 25, 135–76.

⁹ Paris, BNF français 1175, fol. 165 v°. This text has been edited by Joan B. Williamson, *Philippe de Mézières: Le Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage* (Washington, DC, 1993). Philippe’s translation of Petrarch’s version of the *Griselda* story is found on fols. 165 v°–175 v°; Williamson, ed., 358–77.

¹⁰ Peter of Lusignan is one of the unfortunate figures from recent history added by Chaucer to his *Monk’s Tale* that do not appear in Boccaccio’s *De casibus virorum illustrium*. Paul Olson, in “Chaucer’s Epic Statement and the Political Milieu of the Late Fourteenth Century,” *Mediaevalia* 5 (1979), 61–87, and in “The Order of The Passion and Internal Order: The Tales of the Knight, Miller and Reeve,” ch. 2 in *The Canterbury Tales and the Good Society* (Princeton, NJ, 1986), 49–84, also notes the inclusion of Lusignan’s battles in the General Prologue description of the Knight as part of a larger argument: that the Knight’s military résumé bespeaks the author’s awareness of the aims of the Order of the Passion, an idea further supported by Chaucer’s participation in the peace negotiations of the 1370s and the 1380s.

¹¹ This Latin epistle, *Seniles (Epistolae rerum senilium)* 13.2, was last published in the sixteenth century, *Francisci Petrarchae Operum*, 2 vols. (Basel, 1554; rept. Ridge-wood, NJ, 1965), 2:1013–1015; the text differs only in minutiae from the version published in *Opera* (Venice, 1503), fols. 188 v°–189 r°. Aldo S. Bernardo, Saul Levin and Reta A. Bernardo have provided an English translation: *Letters of Old Age: Rerum Senilium Libri I–XVIII*, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1992). For a detailed account of this association and learned analysis of Petrarch’s letter to Philippe, see the essay by Evelien Chayes in this volume.

two authors, and suggests an explanation for Mézières' early acquisition of Petrarch's Latin *Griselda* story, a tale which, as we shall see, the Frenchman employed not only in this work on marriage, but in his *Épistre au roi Richart* as well.

In 1373 Philippe returned to the kingdom of France, and appealed to King Charles V for help in mounting another crusade.¹² The French court was then in the midst of a celebrated intellectual program, epitomized by the translation of a great number of learned texts into French.¹³ Eustache Deschamps was a favorite at court, as were Petrarch's associates Philippe de Vitry and Pierre Bersuire. This devotion to the vernacular arts surely pleased Mézières, himself a translator conversant in several languages. But the same nationalism that can be seen as driving the king's enthusiasm for translation also motivated his refusal to support the crusade Philippe was urging upon him. The king nevertheless appointed the former Chancellor of Cyprus to the royal council, awarded him a pension, and made him tutor to his son, the future Charles VI. Suspending for a time his active pursuit of crusade, Philippe became one of the king's most trusted personal advisors and enjoyed this patronage while serving the court of France on diplomatic missions for the next seven years.¹⁴ His next opportunity to proclaim the crusade would put him in direct contact with a number of literate diplomats at the English court, figures crucial to the transmission of Continental literature into that country.

In 1388, the year of his majority, Charles VI displayed the influence of his tutor by making a truce with England, and expressing his fervent desire to end the Schism and call a new "holy war" for the destruction of the Saracen menace. Around this time Mézières formalized these ideas in his *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, calling for a permanent peace between France and England and for the partnership of the two

¹² Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 416–43.

¹³ The definitive study of the first Louvre library is Leopold Delisle, *Recherches sur la librairie de Charles V*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1907); see also Richard Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1980) and Michael Hanly, *Boccaccio, Beauvau and Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde: Four Perspectives on Influence* (Norman, OK, 1990), 9–12.

¹⁴ Noël Valois, *La France et le grand schisme de l'occident* (Paris, 1896; rept. Hildesheim, 1967), 1:124, observes that Pope Urban VI was impressed enough with Philippe's reputation at the court of France to seek his counsel in 1379 on a matter related to the Schism, despite the obvious partisan conflict of interest.

nations in the reconquest of the Holy Land.¹⁵ Philippe had begun taking more direct action for peace during a truce with England in 1384, and played a crucial role in the ensuing series of negotiations.¹⁶ He seized the opportunity provided by the break in the fighting to promote peace between the two nations as prelude to a crusade, composing a second redaction of his *Nova religio passionis* and attracting the Order's first members from the French and English aristocracy.¹⁷ Among these figures were Richard II's chamber knight Lewis Clifford, friend of Geoffrey Chaucer, and three other courtiers who would have been known to Chaucer as well.¹⁸ The first order of business for this organization would have to be peace between France and England, and in 1395, at King Charles's request, Mézières wrote the *Épître au roi Richart*, in which he condemns schism and war, and extols cooperation and crusade under the leadership of Richard and Charles and the members of the Order of the Passion.¹⁹ Furthermore, in encouraging the proposed marriage between Richard and Charles's young daughter, it wishes the King a wife as virtuous and patient as the famous Griselda, for whom, says Philippe, had been composed by the "eminent doctor and sovereign poet, master Francesco Petrarca."²⁰

¹⁵ Edited by George W. Coopland, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin of Philippe de Mézières, Chancellor of Cyprus* (Cambridge, 1969). As noted earlier, Joël Blanchard has recently published a modern French translation: see his *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008).

¹⁶ John J. N. Palmer, *England, France and Christendom, 1377–99* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1972), 187, notes a "remarkable correspondence between the dates of Mézières's tracts and the various ups-and-downs—particularly the ups—in Anglo-French relations." This study offers a lucid account of the political context of these negotiations, and concludes that "Philippe de Mézières was responsible for the pervasive idealism behind the desire for peace" (*ibid.*, 188.)

¹⁷ Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine 1943, fols. 45 r^o–101 r^o. The relations between the three manuscript versions of Mézières's "rule" are studied by Auguste Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits contenant la Règle de la *Militia Passionis Jhesu Christi* de Philippe de Mézières," *Archives de l'Orient Latin* 1 (1881), 335–64, and Abdel Hamid Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," parts 2 and 3, *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of Alexandria University* 18 (1964), 1–104.

¹⁸ The list is contained in Paris, Arsenal 2251, fols. 112 v^o–114 v^o; published by Molinier, "Description," 362–64. On Clifford as friend of Chaucer, see George Lyman Kittredge, "Chaucer and Some of His Friends," *Modern Philology* 1 (1903), 6–13.

¹⁹ The manuscript is London, British Library Royal 20 B VI. It has been edited and translated by G. W. Coopland, *Letter to King Richard II: A plea made in 1395 for peace between England and France* (Liverpool, 1975).

²⁰ London, BL Royal 20 B VI, fol. 49 r^o; Coopland, *Letter*, 115: "le solempnel docteur et souverain poete, maistre François Petrac." As we have seen, Mézières had already translated Petrarch's version of the tale; see note 9 above.

In the same year as the *Épistre au roi Richart*, there appeared a verse drama on the topic of the patient Griselda; this is the *Estoire de Griseldis*, preserved in a single manuscript at the Bibliothèque nationale de France.²¹ The manuscript does not bear the name of an author, but its most recent editor has no doubt that the play is the work of Philippe de Mézières.²² The “Advice to Princes” theme, common to many of the texts considered in this study, is again quite prominent here: an inexperienced marquis must make an important decision, and is guided by his councillors, five knights who have speaking parts in the play. Special status is assigned to the fifth of these knights, “le Quint Chevalier,” an aged and prudent adviser to the prince. Philippe does not greatly alter the overall plot of the Griselda story for the purposes of his play, which likely was intended for performance in both England and France at the time he was calling for the royal marriage and the crusade.²³ Significant, however, is the fact that the speaking parts that deal most directly and eloquently with the effort to convince the young ruler to marry—a clear reference, in this context, to the proposal then before King Richard II—are delivered by this venerable diplomat, the Quint Chevalier. In this guise, he seems a surrogate for Mézières himself, and an analogue to the character of Conscience in Langland’s *Piers Plowman*: he is a defender of the common weal and advocate of virtuous royal behavior, who, like Mézières, is a knight who has “come lately from abroad.”²⁴ The Quint Chevalier, a figure familiar at court, is extolled as naturally wise, extraordinarily experienced, and a champion of the people: “Un chevalier a ancien / En ceste court, bon catholique / Et qui aime le bien publique, / Saige, de droit naturel senz, / S’a plus veü qu’homs de ceenz...”²⁵ His task is to convince the Marquis—who advances several arguments, mainly frivolous, in defense of his desire to remain single—that marriage will

²¹ Paris, BNF fonds français 2203, dated 1395.

²² See the comments on authorship by Barbara M. Craig in her edition of the play, *L’Estoire de Griseldis* (Lawrence, KS, 1954), 4–6.

²³ Craig, *ibid.*, 14, mentions but does not document a tradition that has the play being performed in 1395 in the presence of Charles VI, to whom a copy of the text is presented.

²⁴ I make this argument in “Marriage, War, and Good Government in Late-14th-Century Europe: the *De Regimine Principum* Tradition in Langland, Mézières, and Bovet,” *Chaucer and the Challenges of Medievalism: Studies in Honor of Henry Ansgar Kelly*, ed. Donka Minkova and Theresa Tinkle (Frankfurt am Main, 2003), 327–49, from which material in this section of the current essay is drawn.

²⁵ Craig, ed., ll. 232–36.

not only bring him peace and happiness, but, more significantly, will safeguard his land and people. In his longest oration, this knight extols matrimony for its beneficial effects on the body politic:

Ha! sire, ne regardez pas
A la paine ne au soussy.
Maint sont marié, Dieu mercy,
Qui moult vivent joyeusement
Et sont de bon gouvernement
Pour eulz et pour le bien publique...
Et aussi moult desavenant
Est a prince de hault paraige
De finer ses jours sanz lignage
Avoir procréé de sa chair,
Auquel est refuge et repair
Le commun peuple de sa terre.²⁶

This pious mentor urges his young charge to better himself by taking on the responsibility of marriage and parenthood, since this reform in his own household will promote concord and stability in the country as a whole. The correspondence between dramatic action and political imperative here seems clear: the young ruler (Richard II, although widowed, is still only 28 years old in 1395) should follow the advice of his old councillor, and marry, for the good of his realm. Is the Quint Chevalier a *Doppelgänger* for Philippe de Mézières? The fictive nobleman shows many affinities, in character and in tactics, to the real-life knight who came back to Paris in 1373 to spend twenty-three years pursuing his perennial objective. This little-studied play serves as another piece of documentary evidence of the political objectives being sought by Philippe and his Order of the Passion in the 1390s. The efforts of the revived Order helped bring about this royal

²⁶ Craig, ed., ll. 378–83, 424–29 (my translation):

“Oh! my lord, do not consider
The pain or the worry involved.
Many are married, thanks be to God,
Who live quite joyously
And who conduct themselves well,
Both for them and for the common good...
And it is also most disadvantageous
For a prince of noble blood
To end his days without an heir
Having been engendered from his flesh,
In which resides refuge and security
For the common people of his land.”

marriage in 1396, but the failure of the joint crusade later that year eliminated any realistic hope for a program of crusade, despite Philippe's efforts in his final work, *L'épître lamentable*. He never again saw such a chance arise before his death in 1405.

If Nicopolis put an end to Philippe's long-sought goal of political union, his Order of the Passion may nonetheless have had the unforeseen benefit of contributing to an intellectual confederacy, arising from crusading hopes in the 1360s and centered on the peace negotiations of the 1390s.²⁷ The Order incorporates members from both sides of the channel, several of them literate emissaries with experience embracing the major courts of Italy, France, and English. The movements of these figures traces the contours of an international network of literary exchange, a system that might well have provided English poets like Chaucer with the themes and manuscripts of the new Italian poetry, and with the impetus to express ideas consonant with principles embodied by the Order.²⁸ A strong case is presented by the career of Oton de Grandson, one of four "evangelists" Philippe chose from among the French founding members of the Order to be emissaries to the court of England. Grandson's position was quite remarkable: a knight welcome both at Paris and London in a time of war, he was an intimate of the formidable John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who was something of a patron to Chaucer as well.²⁹ In his envoi to the *Complaint of Venus*, Chaucer describes Grandson as "the floure of hem that make in France."³⁰ Of the figures under consideration here,

²⁷ The most comprehensive recent work on these conferences is Isabelle le Bis, *La Pratique de la diplomatie sous le règne de Charles VI: Ambassades et ambassadeurs français auprès des Anglais (1380-1422)*, diss. École des chartes (Paris, 1987).

²⁸ See Paul Olson, *The "Canterbury Tales" and the Good Society* (Princeton, NJ, 1986), 49-84, and Maurice H. Keen, "Chaucer's Knight," 45-61.

²⁹ Anthony Goodman, *John of Gaunt: The Exercise of Princely Power in Fourteenth-Century Europe* (New York, 1992), 37-38. Paul Strohm, *Social Chaucer* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), 34-35, responds to assertions regarding Chaucer's status in Gaunt's household, citing records of annuities and other gifts to Chaucer and his wife Philippa (see *Chaucer Life Records*, Martin M. Crow and Clair C. Olson, eds., [Austin, 1966], 271-75) in concluding that "Chaucer did enjoy some kind of Lancastrian tie just short of formal retention in the years 1372 or 1374 until 1400." Grandson's connection was much more formal and official: Philippe de Mézières' 1395 list of members of the Order of the Passion (Arsenal 2251, fol. 112 v°, published by Molinier, "Description," 362) describes him as "Monseigneur Othe de Granson, de la terre de Savoye, chevalier d'onneur du roy d'Engleterre et du duc de Lencastre."

³⁰ *Riverside Chaucer*, 649, l. 82. The only currently available collection of Grandson's poetry is Arthur Piaget, *Othon de Grandson: sa vie et poésies* (Lausanne, 1941),

he is the one who had the best chance to bring literary manuscripts into England. This influence was reciprocal: Grandson's verses served as models for at least one poem by Chaucer, and in at least two of his own poems, Grandson seems to have imitated the Englishman's verses. He had long been acquainted with the court of London, probably since his attendance at the wedding of Lionel of Clarence and Violante Visconti in 1369; he served Edward III and Richard II, with one interruption, from around that time until 1396.³¹

Among Grandson's friends was Eustache Deschamps, composer of a ballade that praises Chaucer and describes an exchange of poetry with him. Moreover, Deschamps' ballades dealing with the courtly debate over the Flower and the Leaf—very *à la mode* in both Paris and London in the mid-1380s—could well be the source of Chaucer's lines on the subject in the *Legend of Good Women*.³² The ballade by Deschamps, who witnessed at least one peace conference, also describes Order member Lewis Clifford as one who had carried poems between himself and Chaucer in the past.³³ Clifford and a number of his fellow Lollards

although a new edition is slated to appear soon: Joan Grenier-Winther, ed., *Oton de Granson, Les poésies: Édition critique* (Paris, 2010), forthcoming.

³¹ James Wimsatt, *Chaucer and the Poems of "Ch"* (Cambridge, 1982), 50–51, outlines Grandson's career and suggests a connection between Grandson and the so-called "Ch" compilation now conserved at the University of Pennsylvania, Manuscript French 15. Charles R. Mudge, *The Pennsylvania Chansonier, a Critical Edition of Ninety-Five Anonymous Ballades from the Fourteenth Century*, Indiana Univ. diss. (1972), 10–11, cited in Wimsatt, "Ch," 47 n. 2, argues that this manuscript that could be the "livres des Balades Messire Othes de Grantson" owned by Charles VI's queen, Isabeau of Bavaria. Pennsylvania's MS French 15 includes poems mostly by Guillaume de Machaut and Grandson himself, including the five ballades that Chaucer translated in composing his triple ballade "The Complaint of Venus." The manuscript also contains a ballade by Eustache Deschamps, and fifteen poems accompanied by the initials "Ch," a signature that has been interpreted as signifying Chaucer's authorship. For a fuller treatment of Grandson's connections and suggestions of his role as transmitter, see chap. 7, "Chaucer and Oton de Granson," in Wimsatt's *Chaucer and His French Contemporaries: Natural Music in the Fourteenth Century* (Toronto, 1991), 210–41.

³² Wimsatt, *Chaucer and his French Contemporaries*, 242–72 discusses the exchange of poems between Deschamps and Chaucer, focusing upon the Deschamps ballade "O Socrates plains de philosophie," which contains the refrain "Grant translateur Geffroy Chaucier" (*Œuvres complètes*, ed. A. de Queux de Saint-Hilaire and G. Raynaud [Paris: 1880], 2.138–40, no. 138.) Kittredge, "Chaucer and Some of His Friends" (as note 18 above), 1–6, cites the four ballades on the Flower and the Leaf; one of them, *Œuvres* 4: 257–58, n° 764, describes Philippa of Lancaster, eldest daughter of John of Gaunt, as "la fleur de valour," patroness of the "order" of the Flower in England.

³³ On Clifford's membership in the Order, see note 19 above. Philippe de Mézières was also sufficiently acquainted with Deschamps to recommend his poetry to

and chamber knights, such as the poet John Clanvowe and Richard Stury, had intimate dealings with Chaucer and were active in the peace negotiations of the 1380s and 1390s, parleys in which Chaucer himself had frequently taken part between 1377 and 1381. They can therefore be seen as English analogues to the efforts of Philippe de Mézières and of his contemporary Honorat Bovet, who writes of a meeting with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, a man with close connections to Chaucer and to the “evangelist” and poet Grandson. We will return to this matter later. Finally, it has been argued that the iconography of the Wilton Diptych indicates it was executed in the same spirit of Anglo-French détente and enthusiasm for crusade that typified the *Épître au roi Richart*, a closely contemporaneous work.³⁴ This evidence of political cooperation expressed in artistic exchange strengthens the plausibility of exchange between other individual poet-diplomats contributing to the peace movement’s brightest hour.

The documentary evidence heretofore unearthed of the participation of the Order of the Passion in literary exchange is limited to that between Deschamps and Chaucer through Clifford. But if the role of its creator is any indication, the notion that the Order did serve in the transmission of works by the great Italian poets is certainly plausible. We have seen that Philippe de Mézières was *persona grata* at all the major Italian courts and a personal friend of Petrarch; he is well-known as the author of allegorical dream visions, and his translation of Petrarch’s *Historia Griseldis*, the Latin version of the final tale in Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, was itself closely imitated by an anonymous French translation in the 1380s, from which Chaucer drew for his Clerk’s Tale.³⁵ What influence could the member knights of Mézières’ Order have exerted on this process of transmission through their international contacts? There is some evidence that the Savoyard Grandson may have traveled to Italy in Richard’s service before becoming one of

the young king in his role as tutor, see Coopland, ed., *Le Songe du vieil pelerin*, 2: 223. That Clifford knew Deschamps is supported by a ballade in which the poet refers to “l’amoureux Clifford”; see *Œuvres* 3: 375–76, no. 536. The presence in this poem of names of French luminaries leads Kittredge, “Chaucer and Some of His Friends,” 7, to remark that Clifford “enjoyed the acquaintance of the most brilliant French society of the time,” including that of the future Duke of Orléans.

³⁴ M. V. Clarke, “The Wilton Diptych,” *Fourteenth Century Studies* (Oxford, 1937; rept. 1967), 272–92. A dissenting view is provided by Dillian Gordon, *Making & Meaning: the Wilton Diptych* (London, 1993).

³⁵ See note 8 above.

Philippe's "evangelists."³⁶ The chamber knight John Clanvowe, a close friend to several members of the Order, definitely knew Chaucer; his *Boke of Cupid*, also called *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, shows deep familiarity with Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*.³⁷ What is even more significant is that his penitential treatise *The Two Ways* rails against war and the spirit of hostility, and roundly condemns the composition and consumption of the romances that celebrate war, much as Philippe does in *Le songe du vieil pelerin* when he advises his pupil Charles VI to avoid the lying stories about Lancelot.³⁸ An accomplished soldier despite his pacifist stance, Clanvowe served in several of John of Gaunt's campaigns in France, and on the 1390 crusade to Tunis, alongside Clifford; he too played a vital part in the peace negotiations of the late 1380s and early 1390s.³⁹ Sir Richard Stury, another chamber knight and a member of the so-called "peace movement," is known to have been an owner of literary texts, as was Lewis Clifford; and Philippe de la Vache, mentioned in Chaucer's poem *Truth*, served alongside Grandson in the peace conferences.⁴⁰ That these knights would display an awareness of Italian literature, therefore, would not be surprising, since such a taste could have been developed through their diplomatic missions and their contacts with the charismatic and cosmopolitan Mézières. The Chancellor of Cyprus, having himself been acquainted

³⁶ Haldeen Braddy, *Chaucer and the French Poet Graunson* (Baton Rouge, 1947), 26–27.

³⁷ V. J. Scattergood, *The Works of Sir John Clanvowe* (Cambridge, 1965), 9–18. Clanvowe may also have been a knight of the Order of the Passion, but the only extant list of members of the Order (see note 19 above) is dated 1395, and Clanvowe was dead by 1391.

³⁸ Coopland, ed., *Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 221 (fol. 245 r° col. 2). "La Reine Vérité" is counseling the young king (Charles VI) on what he should read in order to rule morally and effectively; two folios later (fol. 246 r° col. 1, Coopland ed. 2: 223) she encourages him to hear or read the virtuous writings of his servant and officer Eustache Deschamps: "Tu puez bien lire aussi et ouyr les dictez vertueulx de ton serviteur et officier Eustache Morel..."

³⁹ Kittredge, 17, describes the friendship of Clanvowe and Clifford and their participation in the "Barbary" (Mahdia) campaign of 1390. Le Bis, diss., 369, 370, 371, documents Clanvowe's participation in conferences of 1385, 1386, and 1388–89.

⁴⁰ V. J. Scattergood, "Literary Culture at the Court of Richard II," in Scattergood and J. W. Sherborne, eds., *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1983), 36, points out that Stury owned a manuscript of the *Roman de la Rose* (now BL Royal 19 B XIII). Scattergood also notes that in 1392 Isabel, Duchess of York, bequeathed to Clifford two Bibles, two primers, and a book of vices and virtues, (ibid. 35).

with Petrarch, might even have had access to manuscripts of Italian poems and made them available to those in his circle.

I have been trying to make the case that a group of knights in and around Philippe de Mézières's Order of the Passion made up what can be called a "peace movement" in the end of the century, and that their travels and connections might have served the international transmission of literary themes and texts. I would now like to turn to a writer for whom no evidence exists of direct contact with members of Philippe's Order, but whose writings nevertheless display a desire for peace quite consonant with his contemporaries, and whose activities presented rich opportunities for cultural transmission. The Benedictine monk Honorat Bovet, a courtier and writer whose career parallels Philippe's, never achieved the sort of international prominence enjoyed by the Chancellor of Cyprus, despite his authorship of the famous *Arbre des batailles*. Nevertheless, he dealt with many of the most powerful figures of his day in the secular and ecclesiastical courts of Italy, Provence, France, and England, and his frequent travels would have put him in contact with many other writers and intellectuals.⁴¹ It is his participation in the Anglo-French peace negotiations of the 1390s, however, that presented him with a direct opportunity to act as a transmitter of culture.

While still employed by the Angevins in Provence between 1386 and 1387, Bovet composed a treatise on international war, the *Arbre des batailles*, which he dedicated to Charles VI, and intended as advice for that king; he probably presented it to Charles in 1389. The king awarded Bovet a pension at this time, and apparently commissioned him to join a reform commission in Languedoc in 1390.⁴² Having completed this mission as well as a subsequent assignment, by March 1392 he was

⁴¹ For Bovet's life and works, see Michael Hanly and Hélène Millet, "Les Batailles d'Honorat Bovet: Essai de biographie," *Romania* 114 (1996), 135–81, and a more concise treatment in the introduction to Hanly, ed. and trans., *Medieval Muslims, Jews, and Christians in Dialogue: the Apparicion maistre Jehan de Meun of Honorat Bovet. A Critical Edition and English Translation* (Tempe, AZ, 2005), 4–15.

⁴² In his *Apparicion maistre Jehan de Meun* Bovet's narrator exclaims: "ay je veu tant de choses en la commission qui fu jadis donnée au sire de Chevreuse es parties de Languedoc et de Guyenne, an laquelle je fuz par la volenté du roy" [...I saw many things during the commission to which I was assigned years ago with the lord of Chevreuse in the territories of Languedoc and Guienne, where I was sent by the command of the king]; see Hanly, ed., *Medieval Muslims*, 254–56, ll. 249–52. For Bovet's participation in this and other political events, therefore, the only evidence so far unearthed is contained in his literary works.

apparently taking part in a peace conference at Amiens that involved the Dukes of Lancaster and York on the English side, and the Dukes of Burgundy, Bourbon, Touraine, and Berry for the French. Although the extant registers for the conference bear no record of Bove's presence, one of the Prior's literary works claims without hesitation that such a meeting did in fact take place. Bove's *Somnium super materia scismatis* of 1394 constitutes a plea for restraint in the face of mounting support for the *voie de fait*, the forced abdication of the Pope of Rome through armed intervention.⁴³ The work displays a personal familiarity with most contemporary Christian heads of state, and aligns Bove intellectually and politically with some of the great Parisian thinkers. Most notably for the purposes of this study, however, the prose dream vision includes an account by Bove's first-person narrator of his meeting with John of Gaunt, leader of the English delegation. We will recall that the Duke of Lancaster had close ties to both Chaucer and Oton de Grandson.⁴⁴ A Doctor of Decrees and authority on the legal technicalities of the Schism, Bove possessed all the necessary qualifications to represent the Clementist viewpoint. To summarize: Bove's speaker convinces Gaunt to agree that Boniface IX's election was worthless, as had been that of Urban VI, but the Englishman replies that Clement VII's claim was equally weak, and expresses his desire that both popes cede their thrones and allow for a third to be elected.⁴⁵ This statement encapsulates the *voie de cession*.⁴⁶ The Duke insists, finally, that unity in the Church be predicated upon peace between England and France, and since at least a temporary peace ensued, the conference appears to

⁴³ The text of the *Somnium* is transcribed, without notes, in Ivor Arnold, ed., *L'apparicion Maistre Jehan de Meun et le Somnium super materia scismatis* (Paris, 1926), 69–110. Patsy D. Glatt is preparing a critical edition and English translation of the work.

⁴⁴ See note 29 above.

⁴⁵ Arnold, ed., 91–92: "Et ego: 'Utique, domine, quando eratis cum domino meo rege Francie pro tractatu, et prout scitis, postea quod per rationes vestre Dominacioni monstravi qualiter per tumultum popularem fuerat facta nominacio prima, vos in fine michi concessistis quod re vera non erat bene electus ille de Roma... Tunc dux respondit: 'Carissime, verum dicis, sed multa alia subadjunxi. Tibi enim dixi quod quando inter reges pax esset, statim etiam haberemus unicum papam, ante non. Item quod ille de Roma non erat papa, sed nec Clemens fuerat bene electus, et quod ambo recederunt et fieret unus alter.'"

⁴⁶ For the historical context of this debate, see Hanly, "Witness to the Schism: the Writings of Honorat Bove" in *A Companion to the Great Western Schism (1378–1417)* (Leiden, Brill), 2009, 159–95.

have been a success for the peace movement and Philippe de Mézières, even if the Schism endured.

Bovet's presence at Amiens would have placed him in contact with English peace-movement sympathizers if not with actual members of the Order of the Passion. Since the records of the conference display only the names of envoys of the highest rank⁴⁷ and these lists were quite often incomplete, Lewis Clifford could well have been present among the English delegation: he had come to France a year before with Thomas Percy to set up the March 1392 meeting⁴⁸ and was still absent from England months later,⁴⁹ and might therefore have been in attendance even if the presence of a figure of Gaunt's magnitude had made Clifford somewhat redundant, and caused his name to be omitted from the list of participants. More importantly, the argument represented by Bovet's *Somnium super materia scismatis* clearly aligns him with the cessionist, anti-war camp as regarded the Schism. The attitudes toward war between nations expressed in Bovet's final work display even more intriguing correspondences with the positions expressed in works by Philippe and others. In his *Apparicion maistre Jehan de Meun*, Bovet identifies Western corruption as the root of contemporary problems, and projects internal reforms as the only solution. This dream vision stages a colloquy moderated by the spirit of celebrated poet and social critic Jean de Meun, whose opening oration predicts great misfortune for a world full of "iniquity, / Of cheating, of falseness;" he urges Bovet's dreaming narrator to speak out, "So as not to let [the world] perish."⁵⁰ And so the narrator

⁴⁷ Le Bis, diss., 374.

⁴⁸ BNF collection Dupuy 306, fol. 83 r^o; cited in Henri Moranvillé, "Conférences entre la France et l'Angleterre (1388–1393)," *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* (1889), 355–80, 17: "...messire Thomas de Precy [*sic*] et messire Loys Clifford pour le roy d'Engleterre... fu appointié ou mois de fevrier l'an IIII^{xx} X [1391 N. St.] à Paris, où lesdis chevaliers estoient venus devers le Roy nostre sire de par le Roy d'Engleterre..."

⁴⁹ London, Public Record Office E364 (Foreign Accounts, 16 Richard II), membrane B, the account of Lewis Clifford, shows him absent from England between February 28 and June 20, 1392. Moranvillé, "Conférences," 17, publishes a document from BNF collection Dupuy fol. 83 r^o pertaining to meetings held "en Picardie" three months after the Amiens conference of March 1392: "Comme le Roy d'Engleterre eust envoyé devers le Roy de France messire Thomas de Precy [*sic*] son cousin et messire Loys Clifford son chevalier de chambre, pour certaines choses touchans le fait de la paix d'entre lesdiz Roys..." Clifford, therefore, could very well have been among those in the English delegation at Amiens.

⁵⁰ Hanly, ed. and trans., 64, ll. 23–25:

"...Au monde plain d'iniquité,

takes on this mission, directly and urgently admonishing Charles VI to embark on reforms for the kingdom, and for all of European society. Without a serious program of purification, the evils that now beset the Christian West—including War, Schism, and the encroachment of militant Islam—will only increase. Bovet was an expert in the laws of war, and recognized that battle was required in some cases; however, he found the war between England and France, and even war between Christianity and Islam, to be counterproductive to Western aims, and even immoral.

The *Apparicion* was composed in the fall of 1398, not yet two years after the coalition of Western forces instigated by Philippe's diplomacy was annihilated at Nicopolis by the Ottoman Turks under Bayezid I (1398–1402). Bovet's poem presents stinging criticisms of the French military, condemning the knights not for their willingness to make war, but rather for their unfitness. The speaker who pronounces the harshest criticisms of the Christian military is a noble Muslim emissary Bovet calls the "Sarrazin." This diplomat claims to have been sent by Bayezid to gather intelligence about Christian society in advance of an invasion, and is commanded by Jean de Meun to deliver an honest appraisal of the Christians he has observed during his fact-finding expedition. He dominates the discussion for more than six hundred lines, offering a harsh and wide-ranging critique of Christian society.

After comparing the unity and severity of Islamic law to the religious negligence he has witnessed in the Christian countries, the Sarrazin turns to the matter under consideration here, the war between France and England. At first he claims that the war between Christian nations causes great worry among his people, because the war with England has given the French much practice.⁵¹ But the Sarrazin immediately backtracks from that commendation, proclaiming instead that of all the nations that are engaged in war, the French are the ones they least fear, because their addiction to luxury has reduced their effectiveness in war. French knights, he says, are ruined in their youth with too much luxury, and have no thought for the physical fitness necessary on campaign against the Saracens. He even advances the scathing suggestion that the Christian knights might do well to let their peasants

De tricherie, de fauseté,
Se ne laissasse pour mourir..."

⁵¹ "Car les debaz font vostre gent / Savoir l'usage de guerroyer" [Because fighting teaches your people / The warrior's arts]. Hanly, ed. and trans, 88, ll. 410–11.

bear the fighting for them, since, given the leadership of a French officer, "They would make war against us [Saracens] better than all the nobles of England."⁵²

The Muslim speaker holds up his own people as a model of appropriate military comportment, and implies thereby that they preserve the qualities the Christians knights have lost, and must strive to regain. He mockingly refers to the captivity of Jean de Nevers after Nicopolis, a stinging rebuke for the Western nobility.⁵³ The Sarrazin then adds that French knights dedicate themselves much more readily to chivalric spectacle than to combat, a jab at the pomposity many found responsible for the failure of the Christian forces at Nicopolis, and a sentiment echoed by Philippe de Mézières in the last redaction of his *Chevalerie de la Passion de Jésus-Christ*.⁵⁴ But Bovet's ultimate objective, I would argue, was not to insult the knights; he sought to prod them to the humble reflection that would precede a change of heart, and of military practice. Through his Muslim mouthpiece, the Sarrazin, Honorat Bovet delivers an ultimatum to a Christian military much fallen away from the prowess that in former times had earned them a reputation as redoubtable and righteous warriors. Bovet's bold and desperate plea demonstrates the variety and pervasiveness of intellectual resistance to the Anglo-French war at a critical juncture in the conflict, and argues that his writings deserve a place alongside the critiques of more renowned authors of his time.

⁵² Hanly, ed. and trans., 94, ll. 553–56:

"Ilz nous feroient plus grant guerre
Que tous les gentilz d'Engleterre,
Mais qu'ilz eussent ordonnance
D'un bon cappitaine de France."

See also an extended discussion of this matter in Hanly, ed. and trans., Introduction, 42–44.

⁵³ Hanly, ed. and trans., 88, ll. 435–41.

⁵⁴ Philippe composed a 3rd redaction of his rule, in French—the *Chevalerie de la Passion de Jésus-Christ*—in the same year the Western army left for Nicopolis. He indicates that he had no illusions about how this army was going to proceed: the French, English and German knights were too much in love with one of the most beautiful women in the world, "Dame Vaine Gloire" (Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 2251, fols. 31–32v^o; cited in Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières et la croisade au XIV^e siècle*, 489). See Bovet, *Apparicion maistre Jehan de Meun*, Hanly ed. and trans., 92, ll. 515–16 and note 70.

I have written elsewhere⁵⁵ about Bovet's attitude, quite uncommon for the time, toward interfaith warfare: most notably in his *Arbre des batailles*, he insists that, with only two exceptions, war should not be made against the unbeliever, and his *Arbre des batailles* is therefore considered by Atiya "a turning-point in the history of crusading propaganda."⁵⁶ He further develops this idea in the *Apparicion maistre Jehan de Meun*, arguing that a crusade against Islam would be to strike out in the wrong direction, since all of the problems facing Christianity have resulted from internal error and disunity. This attitude toward war with Islam, of course, is quite distinct from that of Philippe de Mézières, who clamors for crusade in nearly all his extant writings. While Honorat Bovet insists that internal reform alone will resolve Christianity's issues with Islam, for Philippe, crusade will be the instrument of the Lord in punishing the infidel, and regaining for His church on earth the lands where Christ wrought the redemption of humankind. Although he nowhere invokes canon law or other authorities on the issue—unlike Bovet, Philippe's taste is more for theological allegory than for learned citation—his crusade falls ostensibly under the rubric of quest to recover territories that have been "lost," in this case, the Holy Land. His Order of the Passion, having once made peace between Christian nations and assembled those forces in humility and righteousness,⁵⁷ will convert "the schismatics and the infidels, Tartars, Turks, Jews, and Saracens to the true faith of the Church of Rome]."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ "Marriage, War, and Good Government in Late-14th-Century Europe"; see note 24 above.

⁵⁶ Aziz Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London, 1934), 123. Atiya discusses the anti-crusade stances of late fourteenth-century writers such as John Gower and William Langland, and includes Bovet in this group, presenting a useful summary of his pronouncements on this topic drawn from his *Arbre des batailles*, notably his declaration that the Pope has no right to issue indulgence for war against the Saracens in lands other than the Holy Land. See Ernest Nys, ed., *L'arbre des batailles d'Honoré Bonet* (Brussels, 1883), Pt. 4, ch. 2, 85–88). Kiril Petkov, "The Rotten Apple and the Good Apples: Orthodox, Catholics, and Turks in Philippe de Mézières's Crusading Propaganda," *Journal of Medieval History* 23/2 (1997), 255–70, here 267, also cites Bovet's *Arbre* as an essential statement on changing attitudes toward crusade in the late fourteenth century. See as well Philippe Contamine, *La Guerre au moyen âge* (Paris, 1980), who refers to Bovet's works at several points in his broader discussion of the "just war"; see 230 and 240–41.

⁵⁷ Coopland, ed., *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 2: 292.

⁵⁸ Coopland, ed., *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 2: 296: "les scismatiques et les infidelx, Tartres, Turcs et Juifz et Sarrazins, a la vraye foy de l'eglise de Romme...."

For his part, Honorat Bovet is a pacifist only inasmuch as he is a reformer; he admits of the possibility that war can be an instrument of good, but holds, with Philippe, that the war between the English and French is no such conflict. He chides the chivalry for their profligacy, hoping that their conversion, when achieved alongside reformation in the clergy and the laity, will bring about another conversion, that of the Muslims. They are not enemies but rather a part of Christianity's flock gone astray, a gross physical manifestation of its corrupt spiritual condition.⁵⁹ Bovet's optimism calls to mind William Langland's vision of converted Muslims during Christ's coming reign: "And Sarsynes for that sighte shul synge *Gloria in excelsis*."⁶⁰ Indeed, later in the B-Text of *Piers Plowman*, the narrator calls attention to the closeness of Christian and Muslim belief, and demands conversion rather than conquest.

Bovet's pronouncements on peace evoked a reference to the Englishman Langland; I will now close this examination by turning our attention to his countryman Geoffrey Chaucer, with whom we began. A brief recapitulation: from the cultural milieu represented by the Order of the Passion, a so-called "peace movement" centered around the Anglo-French negotiations of the 1380s and 1390s arises, in which Philippe de Mézières is the key figure, and the key document is his 1395 letter to King Richard of England. How does Chaucer fit into this picture? It is well known that he is very cautious about making political pronouncements, a prudence quite likely the result of his having survived a number of deadly episodes at the court of London.⁶¹ He nowhere makes the kind of proclamations we see in the works of Philippe, or in those of Bovet—the latter's candor, of course, may well have put an end to his court career.⁶² Nevertheless, given that Chaucer was not only a courtier but an active participant in diplomacy, we cannot ignore the political import of his poetical production. His *Knight's Tale* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, for example, can be

⁵⁹ For a thorough treatment of this issue, see Hanly, ed. and trans., Introduction ("Bovet and Islam: A Key to the *Apparicion*"), 33–56.

⁶⁰ *Piers Plowman*, Passus 3 l. 327: A. V. C. Schmidt, ed., *The Vision of Piers Plowman: A Critical Edition of the B-Text Based on Trinity College Cambridge MS B.15.17*, 2nd ed. (London, 1995), 51.

⁶¹ See Strohm, *Social Chaucer*, for a discussion of this context.

⁶² See Hanly, "Literature and Dissent in the Court of Charles VI: The Careers of the 'Courtier-Poets' Philippe de Mézières and Honorat Bovet" in *Tradition and Ecstasy: The Agony of the 14th Century*, ed. Nancy van Deusen (Ottawa, 1997), 273–90.

taken to represent trenchant critiques of the chivalric enterprise.⁶³ In Robert Yeager's words, "Chaucer's preference for peace seems permanent, if somewhat inchoate; implicitly apparent throughout his work is a ubiquitous skepticism about the claims of chivalry."⁶⁴ I will comment briefly on the two tales told by the Chaucer character in the *Canterbury Tales* with a view to placing them in the context of the peace movement. Consider the zany parody in his Tale of Sir Thopas, a *reductio ad absurdum* of the values of medieval romance. Invoking John Clanvowe's condemnations of the romance genre—which, I have noted, were much like Philippe's in *Le songe du vieil pelerin*⁶⁵—John Scattergood makes the compelling case that Chaucer's poem "seems to be part of the this same movement against the values of the warrior ethos and against those sorts of literature which served to sustain them."⁶⁶ The prose *Tale of Melibee*, also told by the Chaucer character in the *Canterbury* compilation, can be read as a pacifist statement as well. This prose tale describes the predicament of a nobleman, Melibee, whose wife and daughter have been assaulted and his property damaged by his enemies. He calls for a council of advisers, and immediately proclaims his desire for retributive war, a position supported by various groups, most vociferously the young men. A sage older counselor, however, opposes the rush to battle, declaring that "Many a man crying 'War! War!' has little idea what war really means."⁶⁷ The main body of the tale features a debate between Melibee, who comes to represent the warrior ethos, and his eloquent, learned wife, significantly named Prudence. She firmly advocates peaceful negotiation with his adversaries, pointing out that wars, once begun, are awfully hard to end, and that war always ends up being more expensive than one imagines—advice that could certainly be pointed toward the endless and costly war with France, a conflict whose termination was being called for by more and more of England's populace in this time. We

⁶³ A notable example is Lee Patterson, *Chaucer and the Subject of History* (Madison, 1991).

⁶⁴ Yeager, R. F. "'Pax poetica': On the Pacifism of Chaucer and Gower," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 9 (1987): 97–121.

⁶⁵ See note 38 above.

⁶⁶ V. J. Scattergood, "Chaucer and the French War: Sir Thopas and Melibee," in Glyn S. Burgess, ed., *Court and Poet: Selected Proceedings of the Third Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society* (Liverpool, 1981), 291.

⁶⁷ *Riverside Chaucer*, 219, l. 1036: "...ther is ful many a man that crieth 'Werre, werre!' that woot ful litel what werre amounteth."

have seen that Chaucer not only knew various knights who served on peace missions in the 1380s and 1390s, but himself had worked on such assignments.

Of all the people I have mentioned in this paper, only Philippe de Mézières coupled the drive for peace with a parallel drive for crusade. But his energetic campaigning for a cessation of hostilities between England and France had a remarkable impact on European history in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. His Order of the Passion represents one of the most significant examples of international cooperation in the period. I have advanced the hypothesis that Philippe's efforts to link England and France in peace gave rise to an analogous system that played a considerable role in the transmission of literary texts and themes. This examination has taken us rather far, at times, from a focus on the Philippe's life, his works, and his ambitions, which were frustrated in the political realm. Nevertheless, if he could not leave a re-conquered Jerusalem as his legacy, the idea that his long labors might have assisted in the capture of England by Italian literati might not be such scant consolation.

TROIS LETTRES POUR LA POSTÉRITÉ:
LA CORRESPONDANCE ENTRE PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES,
BONIFACE LUPI ET FRANÇOIS PÉTRARQUE
(MS. ARSENAL 499)*

Evelien Chayes

En 1892, Nicolas Jorga remit en lumière le manuscrit D 499 de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, un document de la fin du XIV^e siècle contenant dix-neuf lettres écrites par Philippe de Mézières ou adressées à lui. Selon Jorga, la main n'est pas de Mézières¹. Il signala en particulier trois lettres: une adressée à Bonifazio dei Lupi, une réponse de ce dernier et une lettre de François Pétrarque à Philippe, toutes à propos de la mort d'un soldat. Jorga identifia ce dernier comme Giacomo dei Rossi. Cette redécouverte mit davantage en relief le lien amical entre Pétrarque et le chancelier du roi de Chypre, amitié que Philippe avait attestée dans le « Prologue » de sa traduction de l'*Historia Griseldis* de Pétrarque, incluse dans son *Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage* (écrit entre 1384–89). Dans cette pièce liminaire, il déclare que l'« escrivain de cestui livre trouva cette histoire en Lombardie entre les gracieuses escriptures du vaillant et solepnel docteur-poète, maistre Fransoys Patrac, jadis son espécial ami². » En plus, dans *L'Épître*

* Nous remercions Christopher Schabel et Fritz Pedersen pour la transcription de la lettre de Philippe de Mézières et celle de Boniface Lupi, contenues dans le ms D 499 de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, publiées dans les appendices accompagnant cet article. Le texte de la lettre de Boniface est très corrompu et contient beaucoup de *loci desperati*. La lettre de Pétrarque dans le même manuscrit de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal D 499 peut être comparée à l'édition moderne de la lettre, *Seniles* 13.2: Pétrarque, *Lettres de la Vieillesse/ Rerum senilium*, t. 4, Livres 12–15, éd. critique d'Elvira Nota, trad. de Jean-Yves Boriand, présentation, notices et notes de Ugo Dotti, mises en français par Frank La Brasca et Alain-Philippe Segonds (Paris, 2006), 136–45. Cf. aussi l'édition de Venise 1503 et celle de Bâle 1554.

¹ Car « on y trouve trop de fautes de transcription; » Nicolas Jorga, « Une collection de lettres de Philippe de Maizières (Notice sur le ms. 499 de la bibl. de l'Arsenal) », *Revue historique* 49 (1892), 39–57 et 306–22 (42).

² Mézières, ms. BnF fr. 1175 f. 165 v^o; édition moderne par Joan B. Williamson, *Philippe de Mézières: Le Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage* (Washington 1993), 358. Mézières dans son « Prologue: » « Le Vieil Solitaire, escrivain de cestui livre, trouva cette histoire en Lombardie entre les gracieuses escriptures du vaillant et solepnel docteur-poète, maistre Fransoys Patrac, jadis son espécial ami. » L'histoire de

au roi Richart, écrite en 1395, Philippe parle de Pétrarque comme «le solempnel docteur et souverain poete, maistre François Petrac³.» Après Nollac (1907)⁴ et Wilkins (1950)⁵, Michael Hanly (1997) a suggéré que Mézières et Pétrarque s'étaient rencontrés à Venise dans les années 1360, lorsque le roi de Chypre Pierre I^{er} essayait de réunir des forces pour la croisade⁶. On ne trouve pas de coïncidences de leurs séjours à Avignon. Quant à la date de leur première rencontre, nous aimerions suggérer 1362. Mézières arrive à Venise avec Pierre I^{er} en décembre 1361 pour y rester jusqu'en mars 1363, puis y retourner pendant l'automne de 1364. En 1365, il participe au siège d'Alexandrie et en son absence, le 22 juin 1365, Philippe se voit accordée la citoyenneté vénitienne par le doge Lorenzo Celsi⁷. Il y retourne de nouveau en tout cas en 1366, 1368 et enfin 1369 pour y séjourner jusqu'en 1372. Pétrarque est à Venise entre 1362 et 1367, accueilli par le même doge, qui y reçoit le roi de Chypre vers la fin de 1362.

Griseldis est tirée du *Décameron* de cet autre ami de Pétrarque, Boccace, qui reçoit le manuscrit de Pétrarque en 1374 (l'année de la mort de Pétrarque). Mézières traduira la lettre dédicatoire de Pétrarque à Boccace. Raymond Esclapez, «Philippe de Mézières, *Le Miroir des dames mariées*, vers 1384», dans *L'Histoire de Griselda, une femme exemplaire dans les littératures européennes*, t. 1: *Prose et poésie* (Toulouse, 2000), 141–75 (143) observe que, tandis que Pétrarque témoigne de «préoccupations plus humanistes que morales ou religieuses», Philippe garde surtout la leçon morale chrétienne. Albert Stanburrough Cook, «The First Two Readers of Petrarch's Tale of Griselda», *Modern Philology* 15–11 (1918), 633–43, identifie les deux premiers lecteurs de cette histoire comme Francesco da Carrara (Francesco Il Vecchio), que Boccace avait rencontré, avec Pétrarque, à Padoue en 1351 et 1368, et Cansignorio della Scala, gouverneur de Vérone entre 1359 et 1375.

³ *Épître au roi Richart*, 1395, f. 49r; *Letter to King Richard II: a plea made in 1395 for peace between England and France*, texte original avec version anglaise, introduction et traduction par G. W. Coopland (Liverpool, 1975), 42.

⁴ Pierre de Nollac, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme* (Paris, 1892), 59sq.

⁵ Ernest H. Wilkins, *Life of Petrarch* (Chicago, 1961), 193.

⁶ Michael Hanly, «Courtiers and Poets: an international system of literary exchange in late fourteenth-century Italy, France, and England», *Viator* 28 (1997), 305–32 (309).

⁷ Louis de Mas Latrie, éd., «Nouvelles preuves de l'histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan», *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 34 (1873), 74–77, doc. XI. Venise, Archiv. génér. *Commemoriali*. VII. Fol. 47, v^o; CIVES «Scheda del privilegio», coll. LCR 3:41, N217C7:51VG16:31V: «Luogo di residenza al momento della concessione: FUORI VENEZIA; Limitazioni del privilegio: TETTO NEL COMMERCIO MARITTIMO; il privilegio è stato concesso per benemerenze; Il privilegio è stato concesso per devozione a Venezia.» Document repris dans Louis de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan. Documents et mémoires*, t. 2 (Paris, 1852), 272.

Le manuscrit de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal D 499 contient donc non seulement la lettre de Pétrarque de 1369 adressée à Mézières—connue comme la deuxième lettre du livre XIII des *Seniles*, l'unique lettre pétrarquienne au chancelier, du moins la seule qui nous est parvenue—mais aussi une lettre de Mézières sur le même sujet adressée à un autre ami, Bonifazio dei Lupi (Bonifacio Lupi; désormais Boniface Lupi), et la réponse de ce dernier à Mézières. Les trois lettres ont pour objet la mort d'un quatrième personnage, qui est le chevalier Giacomo dei Rossi (Jacobus Rubeus). Sa mort était survenue en 1369, sans doute vers la fin du mois d'octobre.

Jusqu'ici, la critique pétrarquienne et méziérienne a en grande partie laissé de côté la question de la fonction, de la forme et, en relation avec celles-ci, celle du contenu des lettres. De même, peu de choses ont été dites à ce jour sur la vie et le contexte local des Lupi et Rossi, qui est partiellement aussi celui de Pétrarque et de Mézières. Bien sûr, la perspective outre-mer—celle des Lusignan, de Chypre, de l'Asie Mineure et des croisades—reste un facteur important, mais, comme nous tenterons de le montrer, un bon aperçu du contexte politique et culturel de l'Italie du Nord rattaché aux personnages en question reste essentiel pour arriver à une compréhension plus précise de cette correspondance. Nous verrons que les lettres s'inscrivent dans le genre de la lamentation, répondant à des règles spécifiques; à part des lois de la convenance interne du genre, nous devons tenir compte de la convenance externe, qui, dans ce cas, est nettement marquée par une certaine conception de la *civitas*. Ce qui suit est un effort de reconstruction du réseau des Rossi et des Lupi, de Pétrarque et de Mézières, ainsi que des manifestations de la vie intellectuelle et politico-culturelle à laquelle ils appartiennent. Il s'agit de mieux saisir la fonction propre des épîtres.

BONIFACE LUPI

Fils d'Ugolotto Lupi des maréchaux de Soragna, une famille influente en Italie du Nord, le Parmesan Boniface naquit en 1318. La domination milanaise sous Luchino Visconti, qui convoitait les terres lupiennes, le força à chercher l'appui de l'empereur Charles IV. Après la confiscation, en 1351, de son fief par Giovanni Visconti, Boniface s'exila à Padoue, où il entra dans le cercle des Carrara, tout en restant lié à la cour de Prague. La terre et le fief des Lupi, pris par Barnabé,

leur seront restitués en 1380 par Gian Galeazzo Visconti. En 1355, Venise accorda à Boniface la citoyenneté, en raison des services rendus (en particulier son activité diplomatique dans la lutte contre les Visconti)⁸. Cela eut lieu l'année même de l'installation de Boniface à Padoue, lorsque Francesco Gonzaga et Niccolò II d'Este se réunirent en ligue contre les Visconti, sous la direction de Francesco Il Vecchio de Carrara. Dès 1363, Boniface, «diplomate de réputation internationale»⁹, entra définitivement dans la sphère des Carrara. En 1366, il devint conseiller de Charles IV et de l'Empire. Ainsi, Boniface obtint nombre de privilèges, «gardes et chevaux»¹⁰ et à Padoue, il «s'entoura de marchands et banquiers toscans et parmesans»¹¹. » Notons que, quelques années avant que Boniface Lupi n'entre au service de l'empereur germanique, Cola di Rienzo ainsi que Pétrarque avaient prié Charles IV de se rendre en Italie. Lupi allait désormais agir en tant qu'ambassadeur pour les Carrara, entre autres auprès de la Cour pragoise, et trois ans plus tard, il obtint la citoyenneté de Florence. Francesco de Carrara lui demanda de l'aide diplomatique pour représenter Padoue et Francesco lui-même en 1367 à Viterbe, lors des pourparlers de la ligue contre les Visconti et les Della Scala, ainsi que dans la guerre des Florentins contre Venise, pour établir des traités de paix.

Ce bref résumé biographique suffit pour comprendre que la présence de Boniface Lupi dans l'histoire seigneuriale d'Italie est avant tout marquée par sa diplomatie et son «activité d'homme de paix»¹². Il prit lui-même soin de sa postérité en faisant construire, non seulement l'hôpital San Giovanni Battista à Florence en 1377 (qu'on allait appeler *Ospedale Bonifacio*), mais aussi une chapelle funéraire dans la basilique de Sant'Antonio de Padoue, *Il Santo*—nous y reviendrons¹³.

⁸ Benjamin G. Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara, 1318–1405* (Baltimore–London, 1998), 177.

⁹ Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara*, 178.

¹⁰ Giorgio Batini, *Capitani di Toscana* (Florence, 2005), le chapitre «Bonifacio Lupi di Soragna, Maestro di Guerra e di Pace», 97–109 (107).

¹¹ Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara*, 178.

¹² Batini, *Capitani di Toscana*, 107.

¹³ Voir Margeret Plant, «Portraits and Politics in Late Trecento Padua: Altichiero's Frescoes in the S. Felice Chapel, S. Antonio», *The Art Bulletin* 63:3 (1981), 406–25; Benjamin G. Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara, 1318–1405* (Baltimore–London, 1998); Benjamin G. Kohl, «La Corte Carrarese, i Lupi di Soragna e la Committenza artistica al Santo», *Il Santo* 42:1.3 (2002), 317–27; John Richards, *Altichiero. An Artist and his Patrons in the Italian Trecento* (Cambridge, 2000), chapitre 5: «The Chapel of S. Giacomo», 135–76; Barbara Hein, «Sulle insegne araldiche nelle cappelle gentilizie dei Lupi e una attribuzione ad Altichiero», *Il Santo* 42:1.3 (2002), 373–89; Maria Chiara

C'est précisément à Padoue que se noue le lien entre Boniface et la famille Rossi. Comme l'a souligné Benjamin Kohl, son entrée dans le milieu padouan et plus particulièrement le cercle carrarese avait été facilitée par le fait que

...la mère Legarda était une fille de Guglielmo dei Rossi et de Donella di Marsilio da Carrara et que trois de ses oncles, Pietro, Marsilio et Rolando dei Rossi, avaient héroïquement contribué à la libération de Padoue durant la guerre contre les Scaliger. Boniface Lupi pouvait alors se vanter des rapports avec le grand-père Rossi et la grand-mère carrarese, deux figures importantes dans la société padouane de la première moitié du Trecento¹⁴.

GIACOMO DEI ROSSI

Giacomo dei Rossi était donc un parent de Boniface. Selon les rares documents trouvés sur la filiation précise de Giacomo dei Rossi¹⁵, il était le petit-fils de Guglielmo († Padoue 1329), déjà mentionné, qui avait été cavalier par l'investiture du comte de Lavagne et fils de Rolando, patriarche de la lignée des Rossi di San Secondo. La grand-mère était liée à la maison des Carrara: Donella di Pietro da Carrara. Giacomo s'était marié (son second mariage) à l'une des filles de son cousin Boniface Lupi—lui-même fils de Legarda Rossi, fille de Guglielmo Rossi, et Ugo Lotto Lupi. Cette cousine germaine, la femme de Giacomo donc, s'appelait Agnesina. Dans les années 1360, Giacomo devint comte de San Secondo Parmense et selon *La Historia della Città di Parma* de 1591, il était aussi un noble vénitien, «*co' fratelli fù confermato gentilhuomo Vinitiano*», ce que d'autres sources ne corroborent

Billanovich, «Un Amico del Petrarca: Bonifacio Lupi e le sue opere di carità», *Studi Petrarcheschi*, Nuova Serie, VI (1989), 257–78; Cesare Cenci, OFM, «Bonifacio Lupi di Soragna e i Frati Minori», *Archivium Franciscanum historicum* 57 (1964), 90–109; Louise Bourdua, «Death and the Patron: Andriolo de Santi, Bonifacio Lupi, and the Chapel of San Giacomo in Padua», *Il Santo*, 39:3 (1999), 687–97.

¹⁴ Kohl, «La Corte Carrarese», 321.

¹⁵ *Libro d'Oro della Nobiltà Mediterranea: Genealogie delle famiglie nobili del Mediterraneo*, <http://www.genmarenostrum.com> (version 10/06/2010); Bonventura Angeli Ferrarese, *La Historia della Città di Parma, et la descrizione del fiume Parma* (Parma, 1591), 340. Cf. Giovanni Bandieri, «I Rossi di Parma dalle origini alla metà del secolo XIII», *Archivio Storico per le Province Parmensi* 4 (1977), 247–77; Marco Gentile, *Terra e poteri: Parma e il Parmense nel ducato visconteo all'inizio del Quattrocento* (Milan, 2001).

pas¹⁶. Le proche lien de parenté entre Giacomo et Boniface—après tout, Boniface fut son beau-père—explique aussi pourquoi Mézières, vers la fin de sa lettre à Boniface, après avoir rapporté la mort du gendre et cousin de celui-ci, lui promet de s'occuper des enfants de Giacomo et de la fille de Boniface, Agnesina. Une promesse d'ailleurs qui (comme l'a suggéré Jorga, sans entrer dans les détails) n'a eu sans doute aucune autre implication que matérielle. Que savons-nous d'autre sur Giacomo dei Rossi?

Les détails rassemblés par Ernest H. Wilkins dans son article de 1950—après Jorga (1892)¹⁷—sont fournis par trois autres sources: le *Chronicon placentinum* de Giovanni di Musso (XIV^e siècle), la correspondance de Mézières que nous étudions ici, et sa *Vie de S. Pierre Thomas*. La première source raconte que Giacomo dei Rossi fut chevalier dans les troupes de Barnabé Visconti et fait prisonnier en avril 1363 par la ligue anti-Visconti, lors de la bataille à Solara, parmi d'autres chevaliers de Parme¹⁸.

La lettre de Mézières à Boniface nous apprend que le guerrier lombard mort en 1369 avait participé au siège d'Alexandrie, la ville pillée par les troupes de Pierre de Lusignan en octobre 1365¹⁹. Ensuite, dans sa *Vie de S. Pierre Thomas*, Mézières fait l'éloge de Giacomo, ami de Pierre Thomas, aux côtés duquel il se trouvait juste avant sa mort, le 6 janvier 1366:

...venit magnificus Dominus Iacobus de Rubeis eius dilectus stetique coram eo. Pater vero meus ipsum Dominum Iacobum tristem causa sui respiciens sibi dixit: O fili mi, bene sto, ne doleas. Multi sunt vocati,

¹⁶ Bonventura Angeli Ferrarese, *La Historia della Città di Parma*, 340. Vincenzo Carrari, *Historia de' Rossi Parmigiani di Vincenzo Carraro giureconsulto ravennate, al Serenissimo Principe, il Sig. Alessandro Farnese, Principe di Parma, & di Piacenza, &c.* (Ravenna, 1583), 53–54, mentionne «Giacopo» et Bonifacio et d'autres Lupi «banditi» des Rossi de Guglielmo: «Andò allhora Giacopino Rossi, con Bonifacio, & Rolando Lupi, Giglio Scorza, & altri cacciati da Giberto di Parma, à Soragna, castello nel Parmegiano, per compiacere il Marchese...», mais on n'y trouve aucune remarque spécifique sur les personnages qui nous intéressent ici.

¹⁷ Ernest H. Wilkins, «Petrarch and Giacomo de' Rossi», *Speculum* 25–3 (1950), 374–78; Jorga, «Une collection de lettres», 312–14 et Nicolas Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières, 1327–1405, et la croisade au XIV^e siècle*, 2e éd. (Paris, 1896), 313–14.

¹⁸ Wilkins, «Petrarch and Giacomo», 375, cite: «...capti fuerunt de gentibus dicti Domini Bernabovis certi Nobiles Lombardi subditi sui, videlicet Dominus Iacobus Rubeus [ac alii]... omnes de Parma»; Wilkins reprend Giovanni di Musso dans son *Chronicon placentinum* dans la collection de l'éditeur Lodovico Antonio Muratori, *Rerum italicarum scriptores* 16 (1730), col. 507 et 734.

¹⁹ Sur le sac d'Alexandrie, voir Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), 149; 154; 162–63; 166–69; 171; 178–79.

pauci vero electi, ego vero sum vocatus et de electis. Christus vocat me, ego vado ad Christum. Ne doleas, fili mi, ne doleas. Deditque sibi benedictionem suam et recessit²⁰.

Témoin de la mort de Pierre Thomas, Giacomo le fut aussi de la présence du corps de ce dernier encore miraculeusement conservé dans sa tombe, comme le raconte Mézières²¹. Quant à la lettre de Mézières, elle nous fournit aussi l'information que Giacomo, comme Philippe et Pierre, ne voulut pas quitter Alexandrie et qu'il prit également part au siège du château turc de Candelore, en 1366. Après la mort de Pierre Thomas, les deux hommes poursuivirent leur campagne guerrière au nom de Pierre de Lusignan. Rossi s'était sans aucun doute rendu en Italie en 1368 dans la compagnie de Pierre, sinon avant.

Pour compléter le tableau des rapports politiques et diplomatiques, notons que, auparavant, Mézières aussi bien que Pétrarque avaient prêté la main aux Visconti. Dans le cas de Pétrarque, son séjour auprès des seigneurs de Milan avait mené à un pèlerinage virtuel à Jérusalem. En 1353, Pétrarque avait quitté Avignon pour Milan sur l'invitation de Giovanni Visconti; il devait séjourner auprès des Visconti jusqu'en 1361. Le poète avait rêvé d'un séjour privé d'obligations diplomatiques, mais la réalité fut tout autre. La cour de Milan était fréquentée par nombre de personnages qui essayèrent de se lier d'amitié avec lui et c'est ainsi que Giovanni Mandelli, homme d'armes cultivé, lui demanda de les accompagner dans un pèlerinage à la Terre Sainte. Il n'accepta pas cette invitation, mais se mit, après 1355, à composer un projet de voyage: son *Itinerario in Terra santa*²².

Une décennie auparavant, en 1344, Philippe de Mézières, quant à lui, avait servi dans l'armée de Luchino Visconti. Mais c'était bien avant le règne de Barnabé Visconti et de son frère, qui, en 1362, après avoir fait des ennemis partout et tué des membres de la famille Gonzague (à Mantoue), eurent demandé à Jean le Bon et Pierre de Lusignan de jouer le rôle d'intermédiaire dans leurs affaires politiques. Plus tard,

²⁰ *Vita S. Petri Thomasi* dans l'édition de Joachim Smet, O. Carm., *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas* (Rome, 1954), 152. Pas de mention de Rossi dans l'édition jésuite de la *Vita* (Anvers, 1659).

²¹ *Vita* (Rome, 1954), 169: «Nobilem et sapientem virum Dominum Iacobum Rubeum de Parma, militem.»

²² Francesco Petrarca, *Itinerario in terra santa 1358*, éd. Francesco Lo Monaco (Bergame, 1990).

dans son *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, Mézières évoquera la cruauté de Barnabé.

Dans la lutte incessante contre la domination des Visconti, les chevaliers de la famille Rossi devaient concourir à la restauration du pouvoir des Carrara, au service desquels Boniface entra dès 1363, si ce n'est avant²³. En 1368, Francesco Il Vecchio de Carrara échoua, avec le pape Urbain V et l'Empereur, dans l'effort de guerre contre Barnabé. En mai de cette même année, Pétrarque figura sans doute aux côtés de Francesco pour recevoir Boniface et l'Empereur et en 1369, toutes les parties, y compris les Visconti, se rallièrent contre les innombrables fractions et pillards qui risquent de morceler dangereusement voire de ruiner le nord de l'Italie²⁴.

Sur quels points se jouait donc l'alliance entre les deux intellectuels et les grands seigneurs italiens représentés par Boniface Lupi et Giacomo Rossi dans les trois lettres en question ?

CULTURE ET POLITIQUE ENTRE PADOUE ET PARME

Pendant plusieurs siècles, la famille parmesane des Rossi joua un rôle non négligeable dans la politique seigneuriale de l'Italie du Nord. De père en fils, les Rossi étaient des chefs militaires dans les armées florentine et vénitienne. Ils firent face aux confiscations des Scaliger (1336), mais dans ces mêmes années 1330, leur activité politico-guerrière gagna en importance et les fonctions religieuses exercées par les Rossi allaient de pair avec leur patronage dans le domaine de l'art. Leur patronage, l'élaboration et la manifestation d'un langage héraldique et iconographique, faisaient partie intégrante de la politique et le règne seigneuriaux. Les Rossi, les Lupi et les Carrara s'associèrent et les intellectuels d'avant-garde qu'étaient Pétrarque et Mézières—également diplomates au premier plan de la vie politique—y participèrent et y contribuèrent, pleinement conscients de l'importance de l'image de vertu incarnée par les hommes illustres et de l'usage que les grands seigneurs furent prêts à en faire.

Pétrarque avait été en étroite relation avec la maison des Carrara depuis 1349. Ironiquement, le début de leur alliance est lié au refus d'Ugolino Rossi de recevoir le poète à Parme, parce que Pétrarque

²³ Voir Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara*, 117.

²⁴ Cf. Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara*, 117.

s'était exprimé négativement au sujet de la famille Rossi dans les années 1330²⁵. Ainsi, Giacomo da Carrara, le seigneur de Padoue, l'invita dans sa ville. Pétrarque y fut nommé chanoine de la cathédrale avant de commencer à voyager en Vénétie. Après être passé par Arezzo en 1350, il se rendit tout de même à Parme, où il apprit la nouvelle de l'assassinat de Giacomo da Carrara. L'année suivante, il séjournait auprès de Francesco à Padoue et déployait ses talents diplomatiques pour éviter la guerre entre Gênes et Venise. En 1361, l'année de la peste à Milan, il se réfugia chez Francesco à Padoue, et de 1363 à 1365, il se trouva à Venise. En 1367, il accepta le patronage des Carrara en la personne de Francesco. C'est dans l'entourage de celui-ci qu'il écrivit la majeure partie de son *De viris illustribus*. Commencé vers la fin des années 1330, ce texte reçut une première préface en 1353 et une autre en 1371-74 et fut enfin, après la mort du poète en 1374, achevé par son secrétaire Lombardo della Seta, qui était d'ailleurs aussi un ami de Boniface Lupi²⁶. Pour la composition des *Hommes illustres*, Pétrarque s'était inspiré de Plutarque et de Tite-Live, tout en tentant de suivre l'idéal stylistique cicéronien. Écrits aussi par souci de vérité, les *Hommes illustres* abandonnent les règles de l'hagiographie²⁷. Cette collection de portraits aurait servi de programme pour les fresques de la *Sala Virorum Illustrium* dans la cour des Carrara à Padoue, exécuté par le même peintre qui décorerait la chapelle commandée par Boniface Lupi (la Capella S. Giacomo) dans la basilique du *Santo* à Padoue²⁸.

²⁵ Voir la lettre 5 du livre 9 des *Familiari* de Pétrarque, adressée à Ugolino Rossi et les commentaires sur cette affaire de, e.g., Giuseppe Billanovich, *Petrarca e il primo umanesimo* (Padoue, 1996), 247-48.

²⁶ Cf. Giuseppe Billanovich et Elisabeth Pellegrin, «Una nuova Lettera di Lombardo della Seta e la prima Fortuna delle Opere del Petrarca», dans *Classical, Mediaeval and Renaissance studies in Honour of Berthold Louis Ullmann*, éd. C. Henderson, Jr. (Rome, 1964), 215-36 (228-29) et Billanovich, *Petrarca*, 572-79, sur «Giovanni Dondi, Lombardo della Seta, Bonifacio Lupi: un triangolo di amici congiunti dalla comune vocazione intellettuale; e insieme dalle aspirazioni politiche e dagli interessi politici[;] furono uniti, prima dalla diffidenza, poi dall'odio, per i vecchi signori e dalla fiducia nell'astro nuovo, gian Galeazzo Visconti» (572). Quant à la présupposée vocation intellectuelle de Boniface, nous ne connaissons pas d'autre témoignage que le projet de la chapelle S. Giacomo dans la basilique de Sant'Antonio à Padoue.

²⁷ William T. Rossiter, *Chaucer and Petrarch* (Cambridge, 2010), 55.

²⁸ Les fresques de cette salle sont aujourd'hui presque entièrement perdues à cause d'incendies survenus au XVI^e siècle, qui n'ont pourtant pas tout à fait détruit le portrait de Pétrarque lui-même.

Il n'est pas sans intérêt de signaler ici, pour mieux comprendre le contexte de la correspondance méziérienne en question, la présence pétrarquienne dans les fresques padouanes de l'époque. Kohl a mis en relief le rapport entre «la guerre et la mort en bataille des soldats carrarese et la naissance d'une nouvelle forme puissante de l'art à Padoue²⁹.» À Padoue furent enterrés, entre 1370 et 1385, au moins huit Carrara dans des églises des ordres mendiants et dans la plupart des cas ils sont représentés comme des «*cavalieri armati*, qui ont laissé la vie pour la *signoria* des Carrara, ainsi que pour la foi chrétienne.» Dans au moins trois de ces monuments, nous retrouvons Pétrarque, ou sous forme de portrait ou comme l'auteur de l'inscription tombale ou, implicitement, comme ami important du défunt³⁰. Le plus intéressant pour nous ici est la chapelle de San Giacomo (le patron apoté par les Lupi) que fit construire, dès 1372, Bonifacio dans la basilique de Sant'Antonio. Il avait insisté qu'on y érigeât aussi un monument pour les Rossi³¹. Kohl :

In a contract drawn up by Petrarch's amanuensis, Lombardo della Seta, Bonifacio specified in detail the design, columns, sculpture, and dimensions of his funerary chapel, incorporating the tombs of his kinsmen from Parma, Pietro and Marsilio Rossi. The chapel was dedicated to St. James the Great, patron saint of Spain and of soldiers, whose intervention on behalf of warrior kings, including Charlemagne and Ramiro of Oviedo, was only part of the many stories detailing his life and miracles³².

Il est assez remarquable que, dans un premier temps, il n'avait conçu que la tombe des Rossi. Les fresques dans cette chapelle contiennent un portrait de Pétrarque et celui de son secrétaire (bien que le maître fût déjà mort en 1374) et des effigies de nombreux autres, dont sans doute des Rossi. Dans un article de 1981, Margeret Plant a montré l'importance des fresques représentant, sur l'un des murs, la vie de Saint Jacques à Compostelle. Justement, ces fresques situent cette chapelle dans l'espace des croisades, s'étendant entre Europe et Terre Sainte :

²⁹ Kohl, «La Corte Carrarese», 318 (la traduction est nôtre).

³⁰ Ibid., 318–320.

³¹ Richards, *Altichiero*, 138, à propos de cette chapelle : «one of the most splendid and elaborate of all European funerary chapels[;] a peak of Italian Gothic art, and further testimony to the exceptional levels of patronage emanating from the north Italian courts in the later Trecento.»

³² Kohl, «La Corte Carrarese», 179.

The clear association of the eastern wall frescoes with Saint James, the soldier, obviously increases the relevance of the life of Saint James to Bonifacio Lupi the soldier. It can be assumed that the S. Giacomo cycle was intended as a Crusader's parable, appropriate to a knightly family, to the two branches of the Lupi to be entombed in the chapel. Unique in their representation in monumental painting, the eastern wall episodes reflect a taste well developed in northern Italy for the legends of Spain and of Charlemagne, for their relevance was felt in an age still engaged in crusading³³.

On ne peut que suggérer la possibilité d'une volonté de la part de Boniface d'évoquer, à travers saint Giacomo, le nom de son gendre et cousin Giacomo, qui avait participé, dans l'armée de Pierre de Lusignan, au siège d'Alexandrie aux côtés de Philippe, lesquels avaient eu l'espoir de réunir des forces pour une nouvelle croisade. En tout cas, la dévotion unie à l'idée d'une conquête des « terres saintes » a dû plaire à Mézières.

Dans l'histoire de la présence des Rossi à Parme, on voit un engagement de même nature. Selon Gianluca Battioni, « [l]es liens des Rossi avec la haute hiérarchie ecclésiastique du clergé séculaire de Parme étaient anciens, et servaient surtout à l'expansion de leurs terres seigneuriales³⁴. » De 1323 à 1377, Ugolino Rossi, un oncle de Giacomo, fut évêque de Parme. Il existait une iconographie rossienne réfléchie, programmée, qui faisait allusion à l'onomastique de la famille Rossi³⁵. Comme le signale Giuseppa Zanichelli, pour les Rossi comme pour les autres nobles de leur temps, les chapelles des ordres mendiants offraient « non seulement une garantie pour le salut de l'âme mais aussi, à travers la commémoration, un témoignage pour la postérité³⁶. » Au XIV^e siècle, dans l'église de San Francesco à Parme, se trouvait non seulement une chapelle funéraire pour les Rossi mais aussi, dans l'abside nord, une chapelle dédiée aux Lupi. L'épithaphe de Bertrando II (1336–1396) dans la chapelle des Rossi, constitue un panégyrique de la vertu familiale et de leurs exploits guerriers à Chypre, en France et en Allemagne³⁷. Ugolino et ce même Bertrando étaient également

³³ Margeret Plant, « Portraits and Politics », 419–20.

³⁴ Gianluca Battioni, « Aspetti della politica ecclesiastica di Pier Maria Rossi », dans L. Arcangeli, M. Gentile, éd., *Le signorie dei Rossi di Parma tra XIV e XVI secolo* (Florence, 2007), 101.

³⁵ Ibid., 107.

³⁶ Giuseppa Z. Zanichelli, « La committenza dei Rossi: immagini di potere fra sacro e profano », dans Arcangeli, Gentile, éd., *Le signorie dei Rossi*, 187–212.

³⁷ Voir Zanichelli, « La committenza dei Rossi », 191.

les commanditaires de quelques manuscrits de luxe—et en ceci ils se distinguent des autres seigneurs parmesans de l'époque. Sur les frontispices de ces livres, on retrouve l'image des commanditaires, porteurs de l'habit rouge emblématique du nom des Rossi. Parmi ces *codices* se trouvent des textes classiques : les traductions françaises des parties de l'*Ab urbe condita* de Tite-Live et des *Epistolae ad Lucilium* de Sénèque, commandée auprès de l'atelier prestigieux de Ravanelle Mastei³⁸. Est-ce un hasard si ces textes figurent parmi les sources principales de Pétrarque et que, quant à Sénèque, nous en retrouvons des traces dans la correspondance avec Mézières ? Ces faits historiques et culturels doivent être lus à la lumière des mouvements, intellectuel et idéologique, dont Pétrarque et Mézières furent des protagonistes.

MOUVEMENT INTELLECTUEL

Les déplacements géographiques de Pétrarque et Mézières—à travers l'Europe, pour le premier, à travers l'Europe et l'Orient, pour l'autre—furent accompagnés d'une activité intellectuelle intense, une recherche des sources et des bibliothèques, ainsi que de la genèse d'une œuvre littéraire. Pétrarque chassait les manuscrits et créait sa bibliothèque ; l'œuvre de Mézières et notamment son *Songe* témoigne d'une vaste connaissance des sources antiques et contemporaines. Ils avaient l'idée-image du voyage et du pèlerinage et ils étaient politiquement engagés ; ils faisaient le pèlerinage—ou l'*imaginaient*, dans le cas de Pétrarque. Il écrit son *Itinerario in Terra santa* déjà mentionné, plutôt un « programme de voyage », un itinéraire théorique sans digressions, dans un style cicéronien, clair, orné mais sans excès³⁹. Dans une lettre écrite une dizaine d'années après son *Itinerario*, Pétrarque, sans perdre de vue son idéal stylistique, se montre remarquablement proche de Mézières dans son *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, marqué par le « militantisme moral et religieux » et l'idéal d'« une transformation morale et spirituelle⁴⁰. » Dans ces préoccupations intellectuelles, l'île de Chypre constituait un lieu référentiel capital.

³⁸ Ibid., 190–191. Les autres livres étaient des missels et livres d'heures, les uns, destinés à la lecture dans la chapelle, les autres à un usage privé. Le manuscrit de Sénèque est actuellement à Bruxelles, Bib. royale Albert I^{er}, ms 9091.

³⁹ Lo Monaco dans son « Introduzione » à Petrarca, *Itinerario*, 16.

⁴⁰ Blanchard dans son « Introduction » au *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008), 26–27.

Dans sa brève étude sur Élias de Nabinaux archevêque de Nicosie et la vie intellectuelle à Chypre, Christopher Schabel a d'ailleurs bien montré, après Gilles Grivaud, que, à cet égard, l'île était proche du monde occidental. C'était aussi grâce aux hommes de lettres qui partageaient leur temps entre Chypre, l'Italie et la France que se réalisaient ces échanges entre Orient et Occident : ces personnages collectionnaient et ramenaient des textes, manuscrits, grecs et arabes, et faisaient éventuellement passer dans l'île des textes occidentaux⁴¹. Intéressant est le cas du médecin du roi de Chypre Pierre Ier, Guido da Bagnolo, qui était en possession d'une riche bibliothèque ; il a sans aucun doute connu Mézières⁴². Guido fut l'un des quatre amis auxquels Pétrarque adressa son *De sui ipsius et aliorum ignorantia*, après le défi lancé par Bagnolo, Tomaso Talenti, Leonardo Dandolo et Zaccaria Contarini, à Venise, entre 1362 et 1368 (date exacte inconnue)⁴³. Bagnolo séjourna à Chypre dans la même période que Philippe, aux côtés du roi, et vers la fin de 1367, il l'accompagna probablement en Italie : Guido est de retour à Rome en 1368⁴⁴. Comme Bagnolo, Mézières a forcément contribué à la circulation de manuscrits entre l'île, la péninsule et le continent⁴⁵. Après ses périples entre la Lombardie, Avignon, la Vénétie et Chypre, ce n'est qu'après 1372 que Philippe s'inséra pour de bon dans l'entourage parisien. Avant cette date, nous le verrons en premier lieu comme un intellectuel itinérant et un citoyen de la République des Lettres avant l'heure ; appelant de ses souhaits une nouvelle croisade, il rencontra et s'engagea avec les hommes politiques les plus importants et les grands intellectuels du proto-humanisme et de l'humanisme chrétiens. Dans ce contexte, la rencontre avec Pétrarque n'a rien de surprenant.

⁴¹ Christopher Schabel, « Elias of Nabinaux, Archbishop of Nicosia, and the Intellectual History of Later Medieval Cyprus », *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Age grec et latin* 68 (1998), 35–52 ; Gilles Grivaud, *Entrelacs chiprois. Essai sur les lettres et la vie intellectuelle dans le royaume de Chypre 1191–1570* (Nicosia, 2009 ; version grecque : Nicosia, 1993).

⁴² Ridolfo Livi, « Guido da Bagnolo, medico del re di Cipro », *Atti e memorie della Real Deputazione di storia patria per le provincie modensi* 5:11 (1981), 45–91. En 1360, il acquiert la citoyenneté vénitienne.

⁴³ Livi, « Guido da Bagnolo », 69–78.

⁴⁴ Livi, « Guido da Bagnolo », 68.

⁴⁵ Il y a transmission sous forme de manuscrits de la dissémination de la poésie de Pétrarque à Chypre au XV^e et XVI^e siècle. Voir Thémis Siapkarakas-Pitsillidès, *Le pétrarquisme en Chypre. Poèmes d'Amour en dialecte chypriote d'après un manuscrit du XVI^e siècle* (Paris–Athènes, 1975).

Les textes associés à l'empire romain, comme ceux de Tite-Live et Sénèque, circulaient dans l'entourage seigneurial de l'Italie et à partir de ces textes, Pétrarque avait développé un langage humaniste qui mettait en relief l'idée de la société humaine, de la *libertas* et du *felix princeps*⁴⁶. Sans pour autant perdre de vue la grâce divine: le christianisme, édifié autour de la croyance au «*verum*», est sa pierre de touche et il défend l'idée qu'il faut «exercer sa liberté de jugement et mesurer les affirmations des philosophes païens à l'aune de la doctrine chrétienne»⁴⁷. Depuis son canonicat à l'Université de Paris, l'autorité de Pétrarque y avait été incontestée. Dans le dernier quart du siècle, au Collège de Navarre, parmi les savants remarquables comme Pierre d'Ailly et ses amis—dont notre ancien chancelier du roi Lusignan, alors habitant du Couvent des Célestins—circulent les textes et idées d'Aristote (*Éthique*; *Politiques*; *Économiques*), Cicéron (*De officiis*), Jean de Salisbury (*Policraticus*), ainsi que ceux de Pétrarque, lui-même lecteur de tous ces écrivains, sur l'*homo politicus*, le roi et le tyran, tout comme sur l'amitié en rapport avec l'État⁴⁸.

En 1361, Pétrarque fut envoyé à Paris par Galéas Visconti, après l'invasion destructrice de cette ville par les Anglais; il y tint un discours sur la Fortune devant le roi Jean le Bon. Le maître offrit au roi la première version de son *De remediis utriusque fortunae* (fini en 1366) dont Jean le Bon commanda tout de suite la traduction française. C'est une leçon de stoïcisme sélectif, qui professe la raison et l'importance de la vertu et de la personne devant la fortune. Pétrarque choisit d'insister sur la *personne* du prince plutôt que sur son sang royal. Des dizaines d'années auparavant, Dante, dans sa *Monarchia*, s'était posé le même type de questions, opposant le pouvoir de l'homme d'état et l'autorité du pape. Quand, dans les années 1350, l'ami controversé de Pétrarque Cola di Rienzo rédige son *Commentaire* de ce texte, il ne

⁴⁶ Stephen Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge, 2007), 144–45. Cf. les études de Laure Hermand-Schebat, qui a insisté sur l'importance pour Pétrarque et sa pensée politique du *Policraticus* de Jean de Salisbury, dans «Pétrarque et Jean de Salisbury: aspects et enjeux de leur jugement sur Cicéron», *Cahiers de l'Humanisme* 3–4 (2002–2003), 93–113.

⁴⁷ Laure Hermand-Schebat, «Stoïcisme et christianisme dans les lettres de consolation de Pétrarque», dans *Stoïcisme et christianisme à la Renaissance*, éd. F. Lestringant et A. Tarrête (Paris, 2006), 17–33 (31–32).

⁴⁸ Cf. Bernard Guenée, *Entre l'Eglise et l'Etat. Quatre vies de prélats à la fin du Moyen Age (XIII^e–XV^e siècle)* (Paris, 1987).

répond pas seulement à ses propres préoccupations, mais aussi à celles de ses contemporains⁴⁹.

Philippe de Mézières ne s'était pas soustrait aux interrogations sur le pouvoir du roi. Vers la fin du siècle, son *Épître au roi Richard II* (1395) exhorta le monarque anglais à la participation à une nouvelle croisade en mettant l'accent sur la sagesse de Richard II, une *sapientia* exceptionnelle susceptible de légitimer le pouvoir royal. Dans son étude incluse dans ce volume, Daisy Delogu montre que Mézières, dans son *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, avait fait siennes les idées de son siècle sur la royauté naturelle⁵⁰. Ne l'aurait-il pas fait aussi en lisant et en discutant avec Pétrarque, avec qui il partage une culture intellectuelle qu'ils n'hésitèrent pas à disséminer auprès des princes?

Cette culture partagée faisait bien partie de la sphère culturelle visée par Boniface dans l'entourage des Carrara, à Padoue, et de l'espace seigneurial s'étendant de Parme à Florence, Venise et Chypre, incluant, bien que moins directement, la France. Dans les lettres, les appels à la piété chrétienne et l'idée du soldat du Christ (*miles Christi*) forment le ciment de l'amitié entre ces trois hommes—Pétrarque, Mézières et Lupi—tout en manifestant une visée à caractère politique.

La *fonction* des trois lettres contenues dans le ms. Arsenal D 499 se découvre ainsi davantage à travers ce contexte, politique en même temps que culturel et intellectuel. L'émotion «authentique» dont parlait Wilkins, les «statements of esteem» de la part de Pétrarque, qui voyait Giacomo comme «un ami très cher et intime», en témoigne «la chaleur de l'amitié de Pétrarque pour Giacomo, affirmée par ses expressions répétées de douleur personnelle causée par sa perte», ainsi que les «belles phrases et [des] jeux de mots tout à fait curieux dans une lettre de condoléance» qu'y voyait Jorga, ne sont pas sans contexte littéraire et philosophique ni sont-ils hasardeux⁵¹.

Que peut-on dire de la typologie des lettres, de la structure, ainsi que de leurs enjeux rhétoriques et philosophiques? Prenons-les tout d'abord comme produits de l'art épistolaire.

⁴⁹ Voir l'édition récente Dante, *Monarchia*, Cola di Rienzo *Commentario*, Marsilio Ficino *Volgarizzamento* (Milan, 2004).

⁵⁰ Pour un aperçu synthétisant et plus général du problème, voir e.g. Jacques Krynen, «Naturel, Essai sur l'argument de la Nature dans la pensée politique à la fin du Moyen Âge», *Journal des savants* 2 (1982), 169–90.

⁵¹ Wilkins, «Petrarch and Giacomo», 374; Jorga, «Une collection de lettres», 314.

LE GENRE ÉPISTOLAIRE

Les lettres de Mézières, Pétrarque et Boniface, montrent parfaitement la naissance, en ce début de l'humanisme italien qui allait se cristalliser un siècle plus tard, d'une nouvelle écriture épistolaire, qui coïncide avec l'apparition d'un «réseau international d'échanges littéraires», et avec les espoirs de réforme et l'ambition d'une autre croisade dans les années 1360⁵². Rappelons brièvement cette évolution de l'art épistolaire.

Les manuels épistolaires (les *summae* ou *artes*, de l'*ars dictaminis*: l'étude de la rhétorique au service de l'art épistolaire) avaient gagné en popularité, en même temps que l'*ars* en tant qu'étude du genre était surpassé en importance, dans l'enseignement, par l'*ars grammatica*. Cette évolution est intimement liée à celle des administrations royales et les métiers juridiques⁵³. En Italie, les compilations montent en valeur car elles présentent un intérêt plutôt dans le cadre des échanges économiques, et on s'intéresse moins à la théorie. Un effet de cette popularité fut la réintroduction de la rhétorique cicéronienne dans l'art oratoire, et l'interaction des *dictatores*—qui seront remplacés dans leurs fonctions par les humanistes—avec la vie civique en Italie vers la fin du Moyen Âge⁵⁴. Les lettres sont un instrument diplomatique et doivent témoigner d'un art de gouverner⁵⁵. Avec la redécouverte progressive des textes de rhétorique classique naît le proto-humanisme, notamment en Italie, vers 1350; il se manifeste plutôt comme une (tentative d')

⁵² Hanly, «Courtiers and Poets», 313.

⁵³ Voir Malcolm Richardson, «The *Ars dictaminis*, the Formulary, and Medieval Epistolary Practice», dans Carol Poster and Linda C. Mitchell, eds., *Letter-Writing Manuals and Instruction, from Antiquity to the Present. Historical and Bibliographic Studies* (Columbia SC, 2007), 52–66.

⁵⁴ Richardson, «The *Ars dictaminis*», 64. Cf. Ronald Witt, «Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis' and the Beginnings of Humanism: a New Construction of the Problem», *Renaissance Quarterly* 35:1 (1982), 1–35; Paul O. Kristeller, «Philosophy and Rhetoric from Antiquity to the Renaissance. The Middle Ages», dans Paul O. Kristeller et Michael Mooney, *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*, (New York, 1979); William D. Patt, «The Early 'Ars Dictaminis' as Response to a Changing Society», *Viator* 9 (1978), 133–56.

⁵⁵ Cf. *La Lettre dans la littérature romane du Moyen Âge*, études réunies par Sylvie Lefèvre (Orléans, 2008) et en particulier la contribution d'Olivier Guyotjeannin, «Lettre ou titre? Le modèle épistolaire dans les chancelleries médiévales.» Au début du XIII^e siècle, les chanceliers du pape développent un style oratoire, appelé *stilus rhetoricus*, «sans doute influencé», comme l'écrit Ronald Witt, «Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis'», 14–15, «par les sermons de la croisade du siècle précédent», tout d'abord en large partie d'inspiration biblique.

imitation du langage latin classique⁵⁶. En même temps, Pétrarque, largement inspiré par Cicéron, s'applique à cultiver un style personnel dans ses lettres, qu'il considère comme des conversations, d'après l'exemple des lettres cicéroniennes à Atticus, un style qui devrait lui permettre d'exprimer au mieux ses idées⁵⁷. Pétrarque cultive le genre épistolaire en faisant un retour aux Romains classiques; il réécrit, polit soigneusement ses lettres. Dans l'ouverture de ses *Familiars*, il parle notamment des aspects rhétoriques du genre épistolaire. Il fait référence à Cicéron et aux *Lettres à Lucilius* de Sénèque, qu'il se propose de suivre en mélangeant des anecdotes personnelles avec des réflexions philosophiques. Parmi ses lettres, *Familiars* et *Seniles*, on trouve une quantité de lettres de consolation adressées à des amis; le modèle de Sénèque y transparaît parfois. Les lettres des *Familiars* traduisent le besoin de construire une image de la vie intérieure: une vie solitaire, de contemplation, loin de la société⁵⁸. Une image, d'ailleurs, qui suscitera souvent la perplexité des lecteurs ultérieurs en raison du contraste avec la vie de Pétrarque elle-même, celle d'un ambassadeur (célébrissime, déjà de son temps) au service des hommes politiques. La pièce finale de ses *Lettres de la Vieillesse* est constituée d'une «Lettre à la postérité», une autobiographie intellectuelle.

Or, comment se caractérisent les trois lettres du ms. Arsenal D 499?

PREMIER APERÇU DU MANUSCRIT

En ce qui concerne l'ordre des lettres dans le manuscrit: la première lettre est celle où Mézières s'adresse à Boniface Lupi et déplore la mort du chevalier Giacomo dei Rossi; elle couvre les folios 151r à 152r⁵⁹. La troisième, qui se trouve sur le recto et verso du folio 153, est celle de Boniface en réponse à une lettre de Mézières sur la mort de Giacomo. Selon le scribe, elle date du 1^{er} novembre. La deuxième dans la série

⁵⁶ Witt, «Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis'», 22–26.

⁵⁷ Witt, «Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis'», 29.

⁵⁸ Cf. A. J. Piesse, *Sixteenth-century identities* (Manchester–New York, 2001), 20: “In the twelfth century literary letters (where the influence of classical epistolary genre is often evident) are often used for the expression of personal or ‘autobiographical’ concerns[.] Later, Petrarch was to use the genre for self-construction and self-presentation.»

⁵⁹ Et non pas f. 151v et r, selon Jorga, «Une collection de lettres», 313.

du ms. Arsenal D 499 est celle de Pétrarque. Une main ultérieure lui a ajouté la mention «Patavi pridie nonas Novembris.» Selon Jorga, la date est le 18 novembre⁶⁰. Jorga date la lettre de Mézières de 1367 ou 1368⁶¹. Selon Ernest Wilkins, les trois lettres ont été écrites pendant l'automne 1369 et Giacomo dei Rossi est mort dans l'été ou automne de 1369⁶². Selon les éditeurs modernes des *Seniles*, la mort de Giacomo serait survenue en octobre 1369 et la lettre de Pétrarque date du 4 novembre—justement, «pridie Nonas Novembris⁶³.» Jorga conclut en disant que Pétrarque a répondu à la même lettre que celle adressée à Boniface⁶⁴. Cependant, Wilkins croit que la similarité entre la réponse de Pétrarque et celle de Boniface ne suffit pas pour conclure que Mézières a écrit la même lettre aux deux amis : la lettre à Pétrarque pourrait donc bien être perdue⁶⁵. Nous penchons en faveur de l'hypothèse de Jorga et nous nous demandons aussi si la lettre de Boniface à Philippe n'aurait pas été copiée et ainsi transmise à Pétrarque.

Comme nous l'avons déjà rapporté, Philippe a vu Giacomo au combat d'Alexandrie. Jorga écrit que

Le reste de la lettre est composé de belles phrases et de jeux de mots tout à fait curieux dans une lettre de condoléance : on ne peut s'imaginer le nombre de calembours funèbres suscités par le nom du malheureux⁶⁶.

Ce malheureux, Rubeus (dei Rossi) : «l'homme rougissant et l'homme des ronces.» Pourtant, cette insistance sur le nom de Giacomo a une fonction : tout d'abord, en introduisant la couleur éponyme, Philippe crée un blason onomastique, en correspondance avec les manuscrits de luxe illustrés, dont les frontispices montraient les habits rouges des commanditaires dei Rossi, et peut-être faisant allusion à d'autres manifestations iconographiques de la famille Rossi, dont Mézières avait pu prendre connaissance. Ensuite, ce jeu de mots montre que Mézières fait un effort d'athlétique linguistique (comme le dit Jorga lui-même)

⁶⁰ Ibid., 314.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Wilkins, «Petrarch and Giacomo», 377.

⁶³ Pétrarque, *Lettres de la Vieillesse/ Rerum senilium*, Livres 12–15, t. 4, éd. critique d'Elvira Nota, trad. de Jean-Yves Boriand, présentation, notices et notes de Ugo Dotti, mises en français par Frank La Brasca et Alain-Philippe Segonds (Paris, 2006), 552 et 145.

⁶⁴ Jorga, «Une collection de lettres», 314.

⁶⁵ Wilkins, «Petrarch and Giacomo», 377.

⁶⁶ Jorga, «Une collection de lettres», 314.

devant ses lecteurs, parmi lesquels sans aucun doute Pétrarque. Mais, surtout, il exploite ce motif onomastique lorsqu'il parle de la *caritas* du guerrier unie à la pureté de la fleur de lys : « *candidum puritate velud lilium et caritate* »—et rougissant comme une rose en fleur : « *velud rosa vernans rubicundum* » (Giacomo dei Rossi mourut jeune). Toute cette association suit l'invocation de Jésus, « *bone Jhesu* », lui-même associé au sang (la Passion) et à la blanche pureté. Voilà un réseau d'images puissantes, qui unissent la maison des Rossi à celle des Lusignan (fleur de lys!).

Pétrarque loue Rossi comme le soldat le plus véritable, honnête, franc, puis le plus pur qu'on puisse trouver. Sa vie est de celles qui conduisent à la vraie gloire :

Il était tel que si beaucoup ont voulu suivre cet homme sur le sentier de la gloire, sur la très haute route de ses œuvres, très peu l'ont pu. Jusqu'à ses ennemis qui respectaient ses vertus héroïques, et ceux qui le haïssaient, lui, ne pouvaient les haïr, elles⁶⁷.

En plus, il était responsable pour ce qui est de la gouvernance, témoignait de la constance et de la persévérance, était vigilant dans les pourparlers, ainsi que prévoyant. En plus, dans sa vie, il faisait preuve de modération et il était facile dans la collaboration, agréable, énergique dans les affaires, attentif auprès de ses amis :

[I]l sut allier la jeunesse et le sérieux, le sérieux et le charme, le charme et la sévérité, la sévérité et la clémence ; tant il fut vertueux en son cœur, ferme dans ses résolutions, pénétrant dans ses délibérations, prudent pour le présent, prévoyant pour l'avenir, agréable à fréquenter, fidèle à sa parole, énergique en affaires et dans l'action ; tant il fut attentif auprès de ses amis, peu hostile envers ses ennemis, et capable de se laisser fléchir, respectueux envers ses supérieurs, humain envers ses subordonnés, juste envers le genre humain dans sa totalité⁶⁸.

⁶⁷ *Seniles* 13.2.3, éd. cit., 140–41 : « Fuit quem excelso calle operum multi ad gloriam sequi vellent, pauci possent ; virtutem illam heroycam etiam hostes venerabantur et qui eum oderant illam odisse non poterant. »

⁶⁸ *Seniles* 13.2.4, éd. cit., 138–39 : « Omnia perfecit que ad veram gloriam pertinerent ; plura facere poterat, non maiora : ea fuit in iuventute gravitas, in gravitate iocunditas, in iocunditate servitas, in servitate clementia ; ea demum virtus in animo, in proposito constantia, in consilio acumen, in presentibus circumspectio, in futuris providentia, in conversatione suavitas, in verbis fides, in rebus atque actis industria, cum amicis caritas, cum hostibus leve odium atque placabile, cum superioribus obsequium, cum subiectis humanitas, cum omni genere hominum iustitia. »

Michael Hanly a justement observé que

These qualities bear striking resemblance to key elements of Mézières's program for the reform of Western chivalry via the Order of the Passion: the exaltation of honesty, personal purity, and wise counsel, and the necessity of obedience to commanders, as a brake on disruptive chivalric exploits and the plunder of the innocent poor. Petrarch's description of the aftermath of Alexandria indicates his knowledge of and enthusiasm for Mézières's ideals⁶⁹.

Ainsi nous pouvons conclure que Pétrarque montre de la sympathie à l'égard de Philippe et ses aspirations de militantisme quand il termine son évocation du siège d'Alexandrie dans ces termes :

[C]hargé des dépouilles pour lesquelles seules ils étaient venus sous couvert de religion, ils sont partis, chargés et même écrasés de honte, oubliant leur mission au service de la foi, la plus glorieuse qui fût depuis l'époque de nos ancêtres⁷⁰.

À notre avis, c'est dans le même esprit qu'il faut placer la désignation, par Pétrarque, de Giacomo comme « notre frère. » Entre les conventions qui collaient à l'image ancienne du soldat chrétien—le *miles Christi*, et la *militia Christi*—se trouve celle du « frère soldat. » Ainsi, Paul parle de ses compagnons comme des « frères soldats⁷¹. » La lettre de Pétrarque constitue beaucoup plus que celle de Boniface une réponse à, et un dialogue avec, Mézières.

La lettre de Boniface Lupi se distingue nettement des deux autres, non seulement en raison du grand nombre de *loci desperati* du manuscrit et du langage abstrait. Nous avons l'impression que Boniface a voulu écrire une lamentation qui serait aussi une *consolatio*, genre inséparable de l'épître et illustré par Sénèque et Cicéron. Les trois premiers quarts de la lettre de Boniface constituent une consolation sur le mode philosophique. Dès l'ouverture, c'est une réflexion sur le temps, la fugacité et la nature périssable des choses ci-bas ; en même temps, l'épître fait l'éloge du défunt et présente une plainte du survivant dans des termes abstraits⁷². Boniface était-il influencé par la lec-

⁶⁹ Hanly, « Courtiers and Poets », 310.

⁷⁰ *Seniles* 13.2.9.8, éd. cit., 142–43: « Itaque honesti preda ad quam solam venerant religione simulata, honorati autem obrutique dedecore abierunt, omisso neglectoque fidei negotio, quo nescio an ullum gloriosius ab avorum memoria cogitatum sit. »

⁷¹ Deuxième épître à Timothée. Voir, e.g., John T. McNeill, « Asceticism versus militarism in the Middle Ages », *Church History* 5:1 (1936), 3–28.

⁷² « Celorum motus ac planetarum aspectus multiformiter variant creaturarum exordia, ut sentiunt phisici et vulgaris opinio protestatur. [...] et cuius fama orbem

ture d'auteurs romains, peut-être à travers des *summae*, et ne fait-il pas preuve d'une tentative d'écriture typique pour un proto-humaniste ? De sa conscience de la rhétorique et du style en particulier témoigne la fin de sa lettre, où il loue abondamment le style et l'érudition que Mézières a mis à jour dans la sienne : « Ad quam, amice karissime, mirabiliter me disposuit vestra tranmissa epistola fulcita coloribus, completa scematibus et figuris emanans veraciter a lactei dulcoris rethorico fonte repleto et sacri voluminis sentenciis communica. » Quant à ses exemples romains, nous pensons aux « recettes » offertes par Sénèque avec sa *Consolation à Marcia*, *Consolation à Helvia*, *Consolation à Polybe* et la lettre 63 à Lucilius, *Sur la perte de ses amis*, ainsi qu'aux *Tusculanes* de Cicéron. Sénèque part d'une maxime, qui se prête à une exposition philosophique. De même, la lettre de Cicéron à Brutus, qui part de la maxime « Que la vertu seule suffit à l'homme pour le rendre heureux », et Cicéron, tout comme dans son *De Claris oratoribus*, ajoute la perspective historique et l'idée de l'immortalité à la louange des bienfaits du personnage. Dans la lettre de Lupi, le rappel de l'enveloppe cosmique de la nature, l'interrogation « où est-il, le vertueux ? » ce qui est en même temps une remémoration, ainsi que la consolation qu'il voit offerte par l'avenir (la postérité), nous font penser que l'auteur a eu l'intention de laisser une lettre-monument, qu'il voulait partager avec les lettrés illustres de son temps, Mézières et Pétrarque, qui jouaient leur rôle d'ambassadeurs et contribuaient à l'éclat des seigneurs.

Nous pensons que c'est aussi dans cet esprit qu'il faut lire les lettres de ces deux autres hommes, où prend forme, à travers l'image de Rossi, la notion du *miles Christi*. L'image est ici donc construite dans le cadre épistolaire, elle est sophistiquée, avec possiblement une fonction diplomatique, propagatrice. Puisque Mézières a bien proposé, toujours dans la perspective de la croisade, une doctrine guerrière basée sur la volonté (ce qui est donc proche de la pensée politique développée par Pétrarque), celle des membres, les nobles guerriers, ainsi que sur l'image du Christ, et concrétisée dans son Ordre de la Passion. Rappelons que lors de la troisième et dernière rédaction de sa *Nova*

valoris ictibus propulsavit nec non usque ad perfidas et barbaras nacciones volavit illustris, heu brevi urna clauditur tumulatus. [...] Dic mihi, amice virtutis, ubi gayus humati corporis gestus, ubi militaris astucia viri, ubi sagax industria facti, ubi compta verecundia voltus, ubi verborum parcitas cum pudore, ubi rationis expressio, ubi tranquilla voluntas eiusdem? [...] Sola igitur consolacio restat illius qui iustos consolari novit temporibus oportunis. » Voir les Appendices pour la transcription complète.

religio milicie Passionis Jhesu Christi, dans les années 1390–1396, plus de quatre-vingt nobles et clercs s'étaient ralliés à l'ordre⁷³. Le fondement idéologique de cet Ordre était centré autour du Christ, pour la défense de la force de la vraie croix et de la Passion, et annonce une cristallisation de l'intériorisation et même une sorte d'ascétisme de l'idéal du *miles Christi*—le soldat qui ne fait pas la guerre, qui est là pour le Christ—qui verra le jour dans l'humanisme de l'Europe du Nord⁷⁴. Le rôle de Philippe dans la transmission de l'œuvre de Pétrarque à travers l'Europe (et la France d'abord) a été suggéré par Michael Hanly⁷⁵.

Dans ce qui suit, nous étudions de plus près les lettres de Mézières et Pétrarque; pour mieux les comprendre, nous proposons de le faire sous l'angle de trois aspects compositionnels: la structure (en rapport avec le genre), le style, la description.

STRUCTURE

Rappelons ce que nous disions à propos du genre: nous avons affaire à des lamentations et consolations. Tout d'abord, la lettre de Mézières porte déjà le titre de «lamentation», puis «*lamentandus*» apparaît dès la première phrase⁷⁶. Le genre de la lamentation trouve sa source dans la tradition biblique (chants funèbres); la lamentation proprement dite est suivie d'une louange. La lamentation prolonge également la tradition de l'éloge funèbre classique. Sous-jacente est toujours l'idée que Dieu s'est retiré du cercle, du contexte, humain. On lamente ainsi la disparition d'un signe ou manifestation divins. Dans le Livre des Lamentations, c'est le Temple-Jérusalem. Ici, c'est le *miles Christi* Rossi. Comme dans la lamentation biblique, il y a invocation de Dieu et l'affirmation du rapport entre l'auteur et Dieu (pensons aussi aux

⁷³ Hanly, «Courtiers and Poets», 312.

⁷⁴ Sur l'aspect d'ascétisme, voir John T. McNeill, «Asceticism versus militarism», 4, précise que, jusque-là, la chevalerie prise en charge par les monastères avait été une «fusion entre éléments militaires et monastiques», car disciplinée par la religion, comme «[une] tentative de remplacer la classe guerrière primitive par une classe intellectuelle qui se destinait à l'ascétisme personnel et un emploi de la force constructif sur le plan social.»

⁷⁵ Hanly, «Courtiers and Poets», passim.

⁷⁶ «Epistola pie lamentacionis Cancellarii domino Bonifacio de Lupis directa de morte magnifici et strenuissimi militis domini Jacobi de Rubeis de Parma. Iam iam diu immersus lacrimis vigoreque exhaustus per processum temporis respirare co[g]nabar, nec autem casus flebilis Lombardie lamentandus insurrexit, et in auribus meis subito intonans pre dolore deffecit cor meum in memet ipso.»

Psaumes)⁷⁷. On y trouve de multiples allusions aux leçons de saint Paul, en particulier celles où il est question de la Résurrection. Mézières y ajoute le rapport du défunt à soi et au monde, mettant ainsi en évidence le lien social⁷⁸.

Dans sa glorification du mort, Mézières cite le Psaume 38.6 de Salomon : « homo vivens *non laudatur*, *Salomone atestante*. » Pétrarque se lamente et console ; il cite aussi des Psaumes :

Quant à lui, fameux déjà pour son mérite personnel, il vivra longtemps, avec l'aide de ton éloquence, ou plutôt, sans l'ombre d'un doute, il vivra toujours, avec Celui auprès de qui se trouve « la fontaine de vie » [Ps. 35:10], et ici-bas aussi, à travers sa renommée. Bref, « il sera un juste pour la mémoire éternelle » [Ps. 111:7]⁷⁹.

Notons que cette lettre consolatoire se distingue de maintes autres lettres de consolation du maître par une sorte de « laisser aller » quant à ses émotions, plus à sa place dans une *lamentatio*. Sa lettre ouvre ainsi :

Ta lettre a provoqué et en même temps endigué une fontaine de larmes jaillie, par mes yeux, du plus malheureux des cœurs ; ce cœur, que tu as tirailé dans tous les sens, à ton gré, comme pour montrer, ce que les hommes les plus éloquents nous ont enseigné, la toute puissance, si j'ose dire, de l'éloquence. Cette perte, immense et irréparable, pour moi et pour toute l'Italie...⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Voici quelques exemples de la lettre de Mézières : « Nunc autem meruit 'Israel' vocari, id est 'videns Deum', sicut pie est credendum. Quid amplius dicam? Cui conquerer ut consoler nisi Deo nostro? Certe, ut intueor, a Domino factum est istud, et est lacrimabile in oculis nostris. » « Consolemur ergo +demus magnificencia Deo nostro, quoniam Dei perfecta sunt opera et omnes vie eius iudicia. Confiteamur Domino et collodemus Deum Salvatorem nostrum, quoniam non derelinquit electum militem suum Jacobum de Rubeis... » « ...cum Augustino Deo nostro unanimiter dicamus: 'Da nobis, Domine, inter Sillam et Caripdim ita tenere per medium ut, utroque periculo evitato, salva navi et mercibus securi perveniamus ad portum.' Amen. Valeat in Domino iocunde per omnia vestra milicia fidelis et approbata. »

⁷⁸ Pour ce qui est de la lamentation biblique, je m'inspire de Bernd Janowski, *Dialogues conflictuels avec Dieu: une anthropologie des Psaumes*, trad. de l'allemand par Hoby Randriambola (Genève, 2008).

⁷⁹ *Seniles* 13.2.5, éd. cit., 140–41: « Ille quidem, et virtute sua clarus et eloquentia tua adiutus, diu vivet, imo proculdubio vivet semper cum Illo apud quem 'fons vite' est et hic quoque per famam vivet. Denique 'in memoria eterna erit iustus'. »

⁸⁰ *Seniles* 13.2.1, éd. cit., 136–37: « Fontem lacrimarum de mestissimi animi scatebris per hos oculos erumpentem tua simul excitavit et compressit epystola: tam varie meum, quocunque tibi libuit, cor egisti, ut clarum faceres, quod a disertissimis viris acceperimus, omnipotentem, ut sic dixerim, esse facundiam. Ita meum et totius Italie grave damnum et irreparabile... »

La différence avec d'autres lettres est bien marquée. De manière générale, il console les destinataires leur rappelant qu'il vaut mieux se maîtriser («le seul bien désirable est de se posséder soi-même») et non pas se lamenter sur la mort des proches, que «l'unique bien est la vertu» et que «la constance de l'âme est seule capable de produire le vrai bonheur puisqu'il n'y a qu'elle qui puisse nous ôter la crainte des revers de fortune⁸¹.» Comparée, sur le plan de l'émotion, aux autres lettres de consolation, celle-ci, adressée à Mézières, n'est donc pas représentative. Le contraire est plutôt vrai de la lettre *Familiars* 2.1, adressée à Philippe de Cabassole, évêque de Cavaillon, à l'occasion de la mort du frère de l'évêque. La lettre est sous-titrée «qu'il faut supporter avec résignation la mort de personnes chères.» Dans cette lettre truffée de citations, emprunts et échos de Sénèque, Cicéron et Augustin, l'influence de la pensée stoïcienne se trahit quand l'épistolier déclare qu'«[i]l faut donc se plaindre non pas de la mort d'un seul homme, mais de la nature mortelle des hommes» (*Fam.* 2.1.6) et, avec un écho très clair de la lettre sénéquienne à Lucilius, qu'«[i]l est humain, devant la mort des siens, de répandre des larmes, témoins de son affection; c'est une marque de force morale de leur imposer une mesure et, lorsqu'elles ont coulé quelque temps, de les contenir» (*Fam.* 2.1.4)⁸². Sur ce point, la fin de la lettre à Mézières rejoint le modèle pétrarquéen du stoïcisme chrétien; elle témoigne d'une expérience vécue et fait ainsi élégamment retour au début de la lettre à Philippe:

C'en est assez; je vais freiner mes élans, faute de quoi, rien ne pourra imposer une mesure à mes pleurs. Tu m'as appris à redoubler, déjà inondé de larmes, mes pleurs, et aussi à les retenir quand ils m'eurent épuisé. Je t'ai obéi dans la douleur, pourquoi ne le ferais-je pas dans la consolation? Je vais me consoler, parce que tu l'ordonnes et qu'il le faut bien. Le chagrin, quand il se prolonge outre mesure, est déraisonnable: il nuit à qui se lamente, et n'est d'aucune utilité pour celui sur qui l'on pleure. Je ne laisserai pas, en raison de la peine immense que me cause la mort de cet homme, mes gémissements troubler davantage le bonheur,

⁸¹ Je cite Laure Hermand-Schebat, «Stoïcisme et christianisme dans les lettres de consolation de Pétrarque», dans *Stoïcisme et christianisme à la Renaissance*, éd. F. Lestringant et A. Tarré (Paris, 2006), 17–33 (20). Cf. Pétrarque, *Perdre un être cher (Consolations à Guy de Boulogne, Stéphane de Colonna l'Ancien, Donato Albanzani)*, trad. R. Lenoir (Rezé, 2003).

⁸² Pétrarque, *Lettres familières/ Rerum familiarum*, t. 1, Livres 1–3, Introduction et notes de Ugo Dotti, mises en français par Frank La Brasca, traduction de André Longpré (Paris, 2002), 128–42.

la félicité de cette âme, déjà couronnée des lauriers de ses vertus, pour son triomphe, sur l'arc éthéré, sur les vices et les ennemis invisibles⁸³.

Or, la structure des lettres de Mézières et Pétrarque est similaire à celle de la consolation traditionnelle :

1. Ouverture : une lamentation personnelle du destinataire ;
2. Rappel du rapport d'amitié et de respect du destinataire avec le défunt ;
3. Description des vertus du défunt, un véritable éloge, avec des allusions aux épisodes de sa vie. Cette insertion de l'*historia* nous semble assez importante. Ici, Mézières se sert de la figure de style de l'*evidentia*, ce qui souligne l'aspect témoin-mémoire, dûment reconnu, repris et approfondi par Pétrarque ;
4. Enfin, les lettres se terminent par un retour à la lamentation, mais en s'ouvrant sur la perspective sur la vie éternelle.

Notons les similarités avec l'oraison funèbre des Anciens, prononcée notamment à l'occasion du décès de soldats. Il y a évocation des actes glorieux du défunt, de sa descendance, ensuite du dévouement et sacrifice de soi du soldat mort, qui s'est soumis à l'intérêt public, et enfin une consolation adressée aux survivants, les proches du mort. Dans ce contexte, rappelons encore un texte de Cicéron, source qui a bien pu servir de modèle à Pétrarque et à Mézières, nonobstant le fondement très clairement chrétien de leurs lettres. Une version du *De legibus* circulait déjà en France, pour arriver en Italie vers 1350, grâce à Pétrarque⁸⁴. Ce dernier s'était plaint du mauvais état du texte de son manuscrit⁸⁵. Dans son *Traité des Lois* (II, XXV, 63), l'orateur romain

⁸³ *Seniles* 1.2.10, éd. cit., 144–45 : « Sed iam satis est ; frenabo impetum, alioquin nullus erit flendi modus. Tu me, fletu madidum, flere uberius ; tu me, fletu exhaustum, fletum comprimere docuisti. In dolore tibi parui ; cur in consolatione non paream ? Consolabor, quia tu iubes et quia necesse est stultus est enim luctus longior, et lugenti damnosus et illi inutilis qui lugetur. Non committam ut, propter meam multiplicem miseriam illius morte contractam, letam illam felicemque animam gemitibus amplius turbem meis, suarum iam virtutum laurea coronatam, de vitiis atque invisibilibus hostibus in arcu ethereo triumphantem. »

⁸⁴ Voir Andrew Roy Dyck, *A Commentary on Cicero, 'De legibus'* (Ann Arbor, 2004), 42.

⁸⁵ L'humaniste Poggio Bracciolini découvrit un autre manuscrit lors d'un voyage en Rhénanie et reconstitua son texte à partir d'une collation des manuscrits F et p (Vat. Lat. 3245). Dans la lignée de cette collation parut l'*editio princeps* en 1471 (à Rome, chez Sweynheym & Pannartz).

touche aussi au sujet des lamentations, avec une référence aux funérailles à Athènes: « en présence [des parents du mort] on ne pouvait dire, à la gloire du mort, rien que la vérité—car on considérerait impie de mentir⁸⁶. » Écrit peu après le *De Republica*, le *Traité des Lois* est une tentative d'éclaircir le droit romain sans vouloir le changer⁸⁷, après une longue période de pratiques inventives pour chercher des passerelles entre les différentes lois (en fait, une pluralité de lois), surtout là où il s'agissait de finances et de commerce, « un important pas en avant vers l'instauration de l'autorité de l'Etat⁸⁸. »

Pétrarque a dû porter un vif intérêt à ce traité portant sur la République au temps de la crise de la législation romaine. On a remarqué dans l'œuvre de Pétrarque plusieurs emprunts à ce texte, entre autres dans son traité des *Remèdes des deux fortunes*⁸⁹. Dans les *Familiars*, il cite au moins à deux reprises des passages cicéroniens concernant les lamentations et les funérailles, dans des lettres consolatoires (*Fam.* 2.2.16 et 19; *De legibus* 2.57 et 2.58)⁹⁰. Le poids qu'avaient les textes politiques et législatifs de Cicéron pour les humanistes (italiens) du XIV^e siècle et notamment Pétrarque, est aujourd'hui largement reconnu⁹¹. Un texte comme le *De officiis* devint, à peine découverts les manuscrits des textes de Cicéron, le livre de chevet de l'humanisme civique du XIV^e siècle.

Nous pouvons supposer que Philippe de Mézières a partagé cet intérêt pour l'œuvre du rhéteur romain et qu'il a reconnu les allusions et citations cicéroniennes dans les lettres de Pétrarque. Les deux écrivains

⁸⁶ « de mortui laude, quom nisi quid veri erat non praedicatum esset nam mentiri nefas habebatur; » Cicéron, *Des lois*, éd. et trad. Georges de Plinval (Paris, 1968), 77.

⁸⁷ Georges de Plinval dans son « Introduction » aux *Lois* de Cicéron, xvii.

⁸⁸ Andrew R. Dyck, *A Commentary on Cicero*, 3 (la version française est nôtre). Pour Platon et en particulier l'éloge que fait Cicéron de Platon, voir *De Legibus* 2.39 et 2.45; cf. Dyck, *A Commentary on Cicero*, 245 sq.

⁸⁹ Voir Pétrarque, *Les remèdes aux deux fortunes* (1354–1366), 2 t., texte et traduction, préface de Giuseppe Tognon, introduction, notes et index par Christophe Carraud (Grenoble, 2002).

⁹⁰ Pétrarque, *Lettres familières* 2.2, « Lettre de consolation à l'occasion de la mort d'un ami qui n'a pas reçu de sépulture, et diverses considérations sur les rites de l'inhumation » (« *Consolatoria super casu amici mortui et insepulti, et multa de ritibus sepulture* »), 142–53. Ugo Dotti commente: « [L]a lettre est sûrement fictive et composée dans l'un des moments de remise en ordre et de réorganisation du recueil des *Familiars*. [C'est une lettre] de consolation sous forme dialoguée » (389) et rapproche cette lettre et la suivante au *De remediis utriusque fortune* et en particulier avec le chapitre final du livre 2 de cet ouvrage, *De moriente qui metuit insepultus abici*.

⁹¹ Voir e.g. Peter Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge, 2007).

auraient-ils parlé, lors de leur(s) rencontre(s) à Venise, de l'œuvre cicéronienne, notamment les traités législatifs et politiques, dont les Italiens et Pétrarque en particulier venaient de retrouver une quantité de manuscrits? Mézières lui-même avait écrit dans son *Soliloquium peccatoris* (1387) que «celui qui aime le bon sens et la justice ne peut qu'être admirateur [de Venise]»⁹²—un témoignage de sensibilités qui n'ont sûrement pas éloigné l'ancien chancelier de la conception sénéquienne et cicéronienne de la raison, ni des textes législatifs évoqués ici. Dans la correspondance entre Mézières et Pétrarque, la notion de loi s'associe de façon indirecte à la lamentation; la structure sociétale à laquelle font référence les épistoliers s'étend sur tout le «territoire et l'empire de la Chrétienté»⁹³. Pour Philippe, l'instauration de l'Ordre de la Passion, dont il avait élaboré le système réglementaire dans ses moindres détails, y était indispensable. Les deux épîtres servent à mettre en relief le rôle fondamental joué, dans ce monde utopique, par des hommes exemplaires tel le soldat défunt, ici objet de lamentation, Giacomo dei Rossi.

STYLE E DESCRIPTION

Quant au style de Pétrarque, il est fleuri et soigné; il suit l'idéal épistolaire cicéronien d'une *cornucopie* stylistique restreinte. Une comparaison du manuscrit de la lettre de Pétrarque dans Arsenal D 499 aux éditions ultérieures qui tiennent compte des retouches appliquées par le poète lui-même, confirme combien Pétrarque a tenu à cet idéal: les modifications sont uniquement de caractère stylistique.

Lui-même déborde en louanges sur l'éloquence de son ami français: la manière dont Philippe a décrit leur ami décédé, son caractère exemplaire et ses exploits guerriers. Le soin apporté à l'écriture sur les plans tant syntaxique que lexical reflète les enseignements des orateurs romains Cicéron et Quintilien. Les traits stylistiques en question correspondent à la convenance de la louange *endoxique*, ressortant au genre épидictique, convenance qui prescrit la figure de style de l'*evidentia*, qui sert à mettre devant les yeux, rendre présent, l'objet

⁹² Joël Blanchard dans son «Introduction» au *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008), 13, citant du *Soliloquium peccatoris*, ms Arsenal 408, f. 233v^o.

⁹³ François Pétrarque, *Seniles* 13.2.7–8, éd. cit., 142–143. Voir la n. 95 pour la citation complète.

ou la personne absents, par exemple à cause d'un décès. Ces traits s'expliquent par le rôle de témoin que Philippe assume dans sa lettre. Philippe a vu Giacomo au combat d'Alexandrie :

Nostris et enim importune terga vertentibus, meis oculis videntibus, quasi solus Jacobus firmiter stetit [...] Certe tota vita sua milicia fuit secundum Job, et luctator vere continue luctabat contra vicia velud alter Jacob. Nunc autem meruit « Israel » vocari, id est « videns Deum », sicut pie est credendum.

Dans ce contexte, l'effet de l'aphorisme chrétien « *Israel: videns Deum* » saute à l'œil du lecteur : l'impact de cette accumulation de témoins et la glorification du soldat défunt entraînant la glorification de son « héraut » Philippe—aux yeux de Pétrarque grâce à son don du verbe—produit des échelons de la révélation et fait de chacun des deux guerriers au service de Pierre de Lusignan (l'un mort, l'autre encore en vie) des *evaggelloi*, messagers de la manifestation de la grâce divine⁹⁴. Grâce à son éloquence, Mézières crée l'effet du vraisemblable, se positionne comme témoin de la scène de la vie et de la mort du défunt et joue son rôle de messenger rapportant cette scène. Dans sa réponse, Pétrarque reconnaît donc en Mézières un véritable témoin-messenger, qui a ainsi su garantir la mémoire et la gloire éternelle de cet homme de guerre exemplaire : « Heureux, donc, tes yeux qui ont vu... Heureuses aussi tes oreilles qui ont entendu. » Qu'en est-il des vertus attribuées à Giacomo dei Rossi ?

Mézières rapporte de quelle manière admirable Dieu se manifeste en lui, *miles Christi*, fidèle qui a « couru » vers les lieux saints, se mettant au service du Sauveur. Comme il se dévouait à la foi sans retenue « *pro re publica* »—on pense à l'idéal de l'Ordre de la Passion. À Alexandrie, il s'était battu, fort comme un « lion : » une comparaison

⁹⁴ *Seniles* 13.2.6, éd. cit., 140–41 : «...ille de tuo testimonio, tu de illius preconio nomen vobis clarissimum quesivistis. Quem tu enim stilo non ornaveris et quem stilum ille suis in laudibus non disertum fecerit? Gratias tibi non meo tantum nomine sed bonorum omnium, quia, quod nec ego ita nec, ut puto, alius potuisset, laudum eius agrum uberem ingenii tui acuto et lucido vomere coluisti et suarum florea peata virtutum magni amoris piis imbris irrigasti. » [C] hacun de votre côté vous vous êtes attiré une gloire sans pareille, lui, grâce à ton témoignage, et toi, en te faisant son héraut. À qui ta plume ne donnerait-elle pas d'éclat et, à le louer, à quelle plume ne donnerait-il pas d'éloquence? Grâce te soient rendues, non pas seulement en mon nom mais en celui de tous les gens de bien, pour avoir, ce que ni moi ni, à mon avis, personne d'autre n'aurait pu faire ainsi, labouré, du soc pénétrant et lumineux de ton intelligence, le champ fertile de sa gloire, et avoir arrosé des pieuses pluies de ta grande affection les prairies fleuries de ses vertus.]

bien souvent utilisée quand on parle de la vertu cardinale, humaine, de la *fortitudo*. A bien en lire Mézières et Pétrarque, nous constatons qu'ils construisent un modèle du soldat chrétien greffé sur l'ensemble des vertus cardinales: prudence, tempérance, force et justice, complétées par les vertus théologiques: la foi (dont Giacomo a clairement abondé), l'espérance (il a cru au salut du Christ et sa gloire est éternelle) et la charité: «*cum amicis caritas*» et «*candidum puritate velud lilium et caritate*.» À tout cela, Pétrarque ajoute de nombreux traits favorables qui ne sont pas tirés des clichés disons hagiographiques—comme la douceur et la combinaison du sérieux, du charme et de la sévérité—et c'est sans doute des traits de caractère réels: la marque du «personnel» de Pétrarque et un raffinement qui a dû bien plaire aux nobles des cours italiennes.

En lisant les lettres, on voit donc les plumes des épistoliers à l'œuvre pour créer l'image du *miles Christi*⁹⁵. Pétrarque aurait-il voulu aider Philippe dans l'espoir de gagner des volontaires pour son Ordre?

L'IDEAL HUMANISTE DU *MILES CHRISTI*

Nous pouvons conclure que Pétrarque n'était pas seulement sympathique à l'égard des idées de Mézières, il semble même avoir contribué à l'élaboration de celles-ci, le projet de la *militia Passionis Jhesu Christi*, dont la première règle fut rédigée en 1367 ou 1368. Peut-être a-t-il même voulu jouer un rôle d'intermédiaire dans le réseau diplomatique, conscient de son autorité et charisme de grand penseur. Il y a une forte parenté entre la transformation de la dualité classique de l'*otium* et *negotium* chez Pétrarque et l'utopie de Mézières, qu'il voudrait voir

⁹⁵ *Seniles* 13.2.7–8, éd. cit., 142–143: «...imo quidem Regi eterno ambo pariter militantes, per orientem ac medidm Cristi nomen attollerent et Cristianitatis fines atque imperium prolarent. Iamque non tantum Alexandria, sed Memphis et Antiochia et Damascus et Babilon Cristianorum essent: Cristi nempe sunt omnia, nec Deus noster bonorum indiget nostrorum. Nobis querebatur, et quesitum nobis quicquid id erat, et nobis amissum est; Cristo enim, preter cor humanum quod unive concupiscit, nichil dari potest, nichil eripi.» [servant tous deux également le Roi éternel, ils exalteraient le nom du Christ à l'est et au midi et agrandiraient le territoire et l'empire de la Chrétienté; non seulement Alexandrie appartiendrait alors aux Chrétiens, mais aussi Memphis, Antioche, Damas et Babylone; tout, bien sûr, appartient au Christ, et notre Dieu n'a pas besoin de nos biens. Mais tout cela, quelle qu'en ait été la valeur, c'est pour nous qu'on l'a conquis, et, la conquête faite, c'est à nous qu'on l'a pris. Au Christ, en effet, en dehors du cœur humain, qu'il convoite uniquement, rien ne peut être donné ni enlevé.]

prendre forme dans son Ordre. L'insistance de Mézières et encore plus de Pétrarque sur le caractère héroïque du défunt et sur la gloire éternelle qui en découle nous confronte à une rhétorique au service d'un idéal de la *vie active*—le *fidei negotio* dont parle Pétrarque⁹⁶—centrée sur le Christ et, dans ce sens, cette vie idéale est également *contemplative*. Comme nous le savons, Pétrarque était très actif dans la vie politique—n'oublions pas non plus sa sympathie, manifestée ouvertement et avec audace, pour Cola di Rienzo—et d'autre part, il proclamait l'idéal de la solitude, affichait une image d'ascétisme. Il n'y a pas de contradiction. Il s'agit d'idéalisations basées sur des modèles classiques : le philosophe et la *res publica*. Pétrarque savait bien qu'il était capable d'exercer son influence sur une large audience, à la dimension de l'Europe. Comme tant de leurs contemporains, Mézières et Pétrarque en avaient assez du chaos politique et militaire de leur temps et ils étaient des hommes religieux au sein de la société, parmi les nobles, au sein du monde des lettrés aussi, où l'humanisme commençait à naître.

Notons pour conclure que l'image du soldat du Christ transmise à travers les deux lettres n'est pas très loin du *miles Christi* d'Érasme, phare de l'humanisme mûri, grand maître dans l'art épistolaire dans la lignée de Pétrarque, intellectuel errant qui traversait l'Europe au service du monde intellectuel, un auteur lu également en Italie, qui entretenait aussi des liens diplomatiques. Il fut pacifiste «sauf quand il s'agit de guerre juste... et que Dieu assiste les champions de sa cause; mais surtout le Nouveau Testament est un Évangile de Paix, et le soldat du Christ ne combat pas avec l'épée⁹⁷.»

Une identification du genre spécifique dans lequel s'inscrivent ces épîtres nous a permis de mieux reconnaître leur fonctionnalité dans un contexte culturel, politique et religieux spécifique. Pas moins qu'une émotion intime, ces lettres transmettent un idéal chrétien, une espèce d'*uomo novo*, défini et sculpté par des esprits visionnaires, se servant de tout l'outillage rhétorique qu'ils devaient aux Classiques. La fonction des lettres comporte une dimension publique, dans un sens propagateur, sans que cela mette en doute l'utopisme sincère dont elles sont animées. N'auraient-elles pas été destinées à être lues par les princes de leur époque? Elles le sont en tout cas par la postérité.

⁹⁶ *Seniles* 13.2.9.8, voir la n. 72.

⁹⁷ Jean-Claude Margolin, «Guerre et Paix», dans *Érasme* (Paris, 1992), cxxiv–cxxv. Cf. Érasme, *Ad illustrissimum principem Philippum* [Panégyrique de Philippe le Beau] (Anvers, 1504) et *Consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo* [Guerre des Turcs] (Bâle 1530).

APPENDIX

PARIS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE DE L'ARSENAL,
MS. 499—D-F. 134-166 [1366-82]*
A TRANSCRIPTION OF TWO LETTERS BY
CHRISTOPHER SCHABEL AND FRITZ PEDERSEN

f. 151r-152r

Epistola pie lamentacionis Cancellarii domino Bonifacio de Lupis directa de morte magnifici et strenuissimi militis domini Jacobi de Rubeis de Parma.

Iam iam diu immersus lacrimis vigoreque exhaustus per processum temporis respirare co[g]nabar, nunc autem casus flebilis Lombardie lamentandus insurrexit, et in auribus meis subito intonans pre dolore defecit cor meum in memet ipso. Contremuerunt et enim omnia ossa mea pre angustia, et dolor meus renovatus est iterum [absordus] absor<p>tus in abissum lacrimarum meroris et tristicie. O bone miles egregie et electe Bonifacii, unde exordium sumam lamentandi? Taceam ne, an loquar, nescio. Unum scio, quia turbatus homo sepe caret freno, tacere nemppe mihi impossibile, sed loqui lacrimabile. Erumpatur igitur in medio fons lacrimarum, aperiantur catarathere dolorosi capitis mei, et oculi mei deducant lacrimas, palpebre quoque defluant aquis, quia vox lamentacionis et doloris audita in Ytalia. O incliti milites Lombardorum, una mecum lacrimas fundite, quia ablatu est a nobis dilectus meus magnificus «luctator» interpretacionis nomine ac «rubicundus» cognomine, cuius nomen solum condam reminiscens mihi bene complacebam. Nunc vero luctator rubicundus strenuissimus atque fidelissimus pallidus in terram cecidit. O boni milites, flete et vestimenta vestra (-re MS) scindite, quia non est qui abscondere se debeat a lacrimis in perdicione tanti militis. Eya, inclite miles optime lacrimabilis memorie Jacobe de Rubeis, mi frater amabilis, alia interpretacione supplantator ac honoris fervidus amator, me et enim hac vice supplantasti, quia ante me recessisti. Nec mihi dixisti «vale» remanenti

* «+» = crux. Not used consistently in second letter.

<...> = insertion by editor

[...] = deletion by editor

(...) = comment by editor

in hac valle, in qua «homo vivens» non laudatur, Salomone atestante⁹⁸. Post mortem laudatur securius, quia⁹⁹ admirabilis est Deus in suis militibus, et maxime in magnifico Jacobo milite suo preelecto¹⁰⁰, qui pro fide Salvatoris tanquam athleta fidelis sanctum passagium adimplevit ac pro re publica fidei non modicum zelavit, mirabili victoria Alexandrie approbante¹⁰¹ et precium eius demonstrante. Ipse quoque¹⁰² velud fortis leo cum clippeo fratres suos defendebat, confortando, legem dando, intrepidus cuneos¹⁰³ phalangerum infidelium penetrabat, et, victoria a Deo¹⁰⁴ plena obtenta, in consilio regio, aliis militibus vaxillantibus, miles egregius Jacobus inventus est fidelissimus, ac pro custodia civitatis iocunde paratus miliciam suam expendere, corpus et animam ponere in obsequium Sancte Crucis, resistendo fidei inimicis Egiptum et Siriam possidentibus¹⁰⁵. In Azia eciam Minori, s<c>ilicet in Thurchia, et alibi, Christianis¹⁰⁶ castrum de Candelor debellantibus, magnanimus Jacobus¹⁰⁷ non defuit nec latuit. Nostris et enim impertune terga vertentibus, meis oculis videntibus, quasi solus Jacobus firmiter stetit¹⁰⁸, nec tela [f. 151v^o] Turchorum timuit, artem sue milicie demonstrando ac viriliter dimicando. Strenuitatem eius quis enarrabit? Valorem eius quis ponderabit? Divulgatum certe est nomen eius usque ad insulas et memoria eius¹⁰⁹ in benediccione erit. Hic¹¹⁰ certe a iuventute amator veritatis, equitatis et prudencie, clemencie, magnanimitatis et dux iusticie ac in tribulacione continua magister paciencie, contra Agarenos bellator fortis velut alter Ionata¹¹¹, cuius vere sagitta numquam ab iis retrorsum, nec declinavit clipeus eius in bello et eius numquam est aversa hasta. O mors crudelis et amara, iustis amabilis(=?), terribilis apud reges terre, cur non distulisti recipere florem milicie Lombardorum? Quare non avertisti faciem tuam ab eo?

⁹⁸ Ps. 38.6.

⁹⁹ *hic incipit* Wilkins, "Petrarch and Giacomo" (W) || quia] quam W

¹⁰⁰ preelecto] perelecto W

¹⁰¹ approbante] perprobante W

¹⁰² quoque] quidem W

¹⁰³ cuneos] tuneos MS

¹⁰⁴ a Deo] adeo W; *fortasse* adeo MS?

¹⁰⁵ *hic cessat* W

¹⁰⁶ *hic incipit* W

¹⁰⁷ *post* Jacobus: ^{va}firmiter stetit, nec tela Turchorum timuit artem sue milicie demonstrando ac viriliter dimicando (-tando MS). Strenuitatem eius^{cat} MS (W *habet in textu, sed* Strenuitatem] strentuitate)

¹⁰⁸ *hic cessat* W

¹⁰⁹ et memoria eius *iter*. MS

¹¹⁰ *hic incipit* W

¹¹¹ *hic cessat* W

Numquid non considerasti, quem tam velociter a nobis subripuisti, quod¹¹² non sit in etate sua ei similis in milicia, in virtute et mansuetudine, in longanimitate et paciencia coronata?¹¹³ Conteri et enim ac +agutari valuit fortuna impellente, temptacione invalescente, sed vinci non potuit nec sumergi, quia navicula eius retenta erat anchora sancte spei, et tandem firmatus Jacobus super firmam petram portum salutis intravit, quod misericorditer credo. Transivit et enim per ignem et aquam. Benignus Dominus reduxit eum nunc in refrigerium. Certe tota vita sua milicia fuit secundum Job, et luctator vere continue luctabat contra vicia velud alter Jacob. Nunc autem meruit «Israel» vocari, id est «videns Deum», sicut pie est credendum. Quid amplius dicam? Cui conquerer ut consoler nisi Deo nostro? Certe, ut intueor, a Domino factum est istud, et est lacrimabile in oculis nostris. Cur, bone Jhesu, tam velociter militem tuum belligerum, candidum puritate velud lilium et caritate, velud rosa vernans rubicundum, a nobis miseris abstulisti? Forte voluisti eum tecum habere? Bene quidem ei subvenisti, sicut pie credo. Sed amicos eius orphanos relinquisti, non ambigo. Iam iam ipse merebatur finem inponere huius vite laboribus et tecum esse, quod dulciter spero. Et tu, Bonifacii, frater mi carissime, organa tua in salicibus suspende. Totus absordus {=absorptus?} es lacrimis, non dubito. Cum tui dilecti consanguinei quem amasti recordaris, tanta denique tibi iussit{=?} doloris affectio, quanta extitit dilectio. Cesset igitur dolor, abeat tristitia, quibus attingere non possumus que vellemus, que non solum nullum adhibent remedium doloris, sed augment. Si enim fratrem nostrum et amicum tenerime diligimus, eius leticia gaudeamus. Hodie certe, dimittis (=MS; -missis?) hostibus huius mundi, securum obtinuit triumphum, quia, sicut spero, in Domino obdormivit. Iam non exuriet neque siciet amplius, neque cadet super illum sol, neque ullus estus. Ablata est et enim ab oculis eius omnis lacrima, abiit luctus, et dolor deinceps non erit. Consolemur ergo +demus magnificencia Deo nostro, quoniam Dei perfecta sunt opera et omnes vie eius iudicia. Confiteamur Domino et collodemus Deum Salvatorem nostrum, quoniam non derelinquit electum militem suum¹¹⁴ Jacobum de Rubeis sine adiutorio in tribulationibus que in agone huius vite miserrime circumdederunt illum, sed adiutor et protector factus liberavit corpus suum a perdicione [et]

¹¹² *hic incipit W* || quod] fortasse qui p.c. MS?

¹¹³ *hic cessat W*

¹¹⁴ suum] Jacobeu del. MS

infamie, a laqueo lingue inique, et a labiis operancium mendacium. Vocavit et enim ipsum, sicut pie credo, et reduxit in viam civitatis eterne, ac, via denique completa, ad cenam agni providi(?) faciet eum discumbere, et transiens ei ministrabit sine fine, quod fiat optative. Pro relictis namque filiis clare fame tanti militis, cuius dolore langueo corde puro, me offero in obsequium filiorum tanquam propriorum liberorum. Nobis autem remanentibus +incerto restat grandi[ni]s via, quia incerta et forte modica (=?). Nichil igitur aliud restat nisi, ut cor corpore resurgamus, pro +omnia eius instanter oremus, et nosmet ipsos cum Dei adiutorio preparamus(!), ut digne expectare valeamus adventum Domini nostri Jhesu Christi. Nec sub umbra vivipari¹¹⁵ dormiamus, ubi (ibi MS) +blanda carnis adulatores lacte +per +astus illuduntur et clavo +tymplus configitur quiescentis, set, ut ista evadere valeamus, [f. 152r^o] cum Augustino Deo nostro unanimiter dicamus:¹¹⁶ «Da nobis, Domine¹¹⁷, inter Sillam et Caripdim ita tenere per medium ut, utroque periculo evitato, salva navi et mercibus securi perveniamus ad portum». Amen. Valeat in Domino iocunde per omnia vestra militia fidelis et approbata. Scriptum etc.

f. 153r–153v

Iterum alia epistola responsiva domini Bonifacii de Lupis ad cancellarium super mortem domini Jacobi de Rubeis de Parma.

Celorum motus ac planetarum aspectus multiformiter variant creaturarum exordia, ut senciunt phisici et vulgaris opinio protestatur. Et sic fit quod, si vellem magnifici consanguinei de medio iam sublatis, quem numdum pre extrema (existima MS) cordis angustia audeo nominare, probitates discuter<e> sicut novi, aut +pre [nemore defeceram] memore deficeram in querelis, aut ex ipsis fastidida natura velud divina (dn())a nota querens amplius me suis nutibus provocaret ad luctum, quia quem nemine rogante dotibus elagantibus sociatum produxit in lucem, eo multis indigentibus in committatum reliquit putredinis et horroris +ede crudeli; et quem per contemplaciones altissimas et profundas in suo astris adequavit innicio, vermibus diei (dixi-?) mendus panditur ante tempus; et cuius fama orbem valoris ictibus propulsavit nec non usque ad perfidas et barbaras nacciones volavit illustris, heu brevi urna clauditur tumulatus. Quis igitur nisi demens

¹¹⁵ vivipari] viviparii MS

¹¹⁶ Augustinus, *Soliloquia*, c. 35.

¹¹⁷ Domine] inters *del.* MS

nature commendabit insignia, que sic vanis aspectibus clarent ut dampna ministrent, sic vigent ut vita priventur, sic afficiunt ut langore refecti qui diligunt letaliter saucientur? Dic¹¹⁸ mihi, amice virtutis, ubi gayus humati corporis gestus, ubi militaris astucia viri, ubi sagax industria facti, ubi compta verecundia voltus, ubi verborum parcitas cum pudore, ubi rationis¹¹⁹ expressio, ubi tranquilla voluntas eiusdem?¹²⁰ Et si—quod absit—platonium illud me tribulatio cogat asserare, quod ad influentes constellationes carnis soluto debito anime revertantur, illis non regracior, sed potius convicior quantum¹²¹ scio. Et enim ludum p<ar>averunt oculis meis, quo ammoto, me¹²² suas moras in luce post meas fortiter affectantem turpiter illuserunt. Quid ultra ipsa namque clara facies rote circumflue volens suo virili¹²³ animo applaudere qui, parum de exterioribus curans, erat velud lupus in canum latratu assuetus auditu benedictionem omnium gentium dedit illi, adeo ut tute viveret ubi erat non inmerito seva timenda. Et sic agitur ut qui eum mortalium aspexerunt vita fruenter de suis modulis affabilibus et [a] amenis, mira¹²⁴ canant principibus et plebeis inimicent¹²⁵ inaudita. Sed quia fallacem mutavit nubila voltum¹²⁶, me destitutum solacio telo sic transfixit (-nssi- MS) acuto, quatenus nature neque fortune cicatrices linire¹²⁷ sit opus, cum nec subuis ipsis precise suffragantibus clau- [f. 153v^o]suram posset attingere prime cure. Sola igitur consolatio restat illius qui iustos consolari novit temporibus opportunis. Ad quam, amice karissime, mirabiliter me disposuit vestra tranmissa epistola fulcita coloribus, completa scematibus et figuris emanans veraciter a lactei dulcoris rethorico fonte repleto et sacri voluminis sententiis communica, cuius rei gracia vestre dulcedini grates refero, et benignus animus vester erga me et derelictam familiam vestri quondam amici tanto intim<i>us illabatur cordi meo, quanto mellifluam bonitatem vestram cognosco in suis et ceteris valoris actibus totis +sisscerum conatibus inclinatam; quam conservare dignetur Altissimus per tempora vobis grata. Datum Padue die primo Novembris.

¹¹⁸ *hic incipit W*

¹¹⁹ *non potuit legere W*

¹²⁰ *hic cessat W*

¹²¹ quantum] *fortasse qualiter MS?*

¹²² me] *sa del. MS*

¹²³ virili] *verili MS*

¹²⁴ mira] *fortasse ira p.c. MS?*

¹²⁵ |||||cient.

¹²⁶ Cf. Boëthius, *Consolatio* I carm. I, 19

¹²⁷ h|||re aut l|||re.

THE *VIEIL SOLITAIRE* AND THE *SEULETTE*:
CONTEMPLATIVE SOLITUDE AS POLITICAL THEOLOGY
IN PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES, CHRISTINE DE PIZAN, AND
JEAN GERSON

Lori J. Walters

My overarching argument in this paper is that Philippe de Mézières, Christine de Pizan, and Jean Gerson actively promoted a shared contemplative ideal. This group of thinkers was united in their conviction that contemplative practices were useful in reflecting on politics and could initiate political intervention. The argument is predicated upon the widespread medieval belief in the ability of contemplation and prayer to bring about political change. I propose to show that for all three figures, contemplation was the force driving their activities in the public sphere.

After a brief survey of points of contact between the lives and works of Mézières, Christine, and Gerson, I will focus upon their sharing of a similar ideal of contemplative solitude whose goal was to nourish the active life. Mézières (1327–1405) expresses this ideal through his self-characterization as the “*vieil solitaire*” [old solitary] and “*vieux pelerin*” [old pilgrim].¹ Christine (1365–ca. 1430) does so through her self-characterization as the *seulette*, meaning the “solitary little woman” or the “solitary individual soul,” the soul being feminine in French. For his part, the chancellor of the University of Paris, Jean Gerson (1363–1429) occasionally spoke through the mouthpiece of the *seulette* and glossed his last name, Gerson, as the Hebrew word for “pilgrim.”² One of Gerson’s major authorities was Augustine, who

¹ Philippe refers to himself as the “*vieil solitaire*” in his *Epistre au roi Richart* and as the “*vieux pelerin*” in his *Songe du Vieil Pelerin*. For the texts, see Philippe de Mézières, *Letter to King Richard II: A plea made in 1395 for peace between England and France*, ed. and trans. G. W. Coopland (Liverpool, 1975), and Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin of Philippe de Mézières, Chancellor of Cyprus*, ed. G. W. Coopland, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1969), hereafter *Songe*.

² See Lori J. Walters, “The Figure of the *Seulette* in the Works of Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson,” “*Désireuse de plus avant enquerre...*” *Christine de Pizan 2006. Volume en hommage à James Laidlaw, Actes du VIe colloque international sur Christine de*

had conceptualized the process of individual and societal improvement with the image of the City of God “on pilgrimage in the world.” Gerson’s use of the personae of pilgrim and *seulette* indicates that he interprets them as representing the individual soul as it embarks on a quest for self-improvement, a quest implying corresponding progress in the larger body politic. Augustine was also a commanding authority for Christine, who refers explicitly to the *City of God* in five of her texts,³ and Mézières, who cites the *City of God* no fewer than nine times in his *Le songe du vieil pelerin*.⁴

Of the three authors to be studied here, Gerson was alone in actually theorizing his ideas on contemplative solitude as political theology, which he does in his *Montaigne de Contemplation* of 1400 (7: 16–55).⁵ In that tract, he praises the benefits of contemplation for people without benefit of a clerical education in Latin, the “simples gens,” a term without derogatory meaning at the time.⁶ An example of a “simple person” who practiced correct meditational practices was Augustine’s mother Monnica.⁷ From his use of Augustine’s *City of God* and *Confessions* in his *Montaigne* and elsewhere, it is clear that Gerson considers these texts to be touchstones of contemplative literature.

Pizan (Paris 20–24 juillet 2006), ed. Liliane Dulac, Anne Paupert, Christine Reno and Bernard Ribémont (Paris, 2008), 125–28.

³ Those texts are the *Epistre Othea*, *Charles V*, the *Cité des Dames*, the *Livre de Paix*, and the *Epistre de la Prison de Vie Humaine*. For discussion of the frequency of the use of references to Augustine by Christine and Gerson, see Lori J. Walters, “The Figure of the *Seulette*,” 121.

⁴ *Songe*, 1: 266, chap. 26; 274, chap. 29; 471, chap. 92; 578, chap. 131; 617, chap. 159; 2:152, chap. 201; 194, chap. 220; 223, chap. 229; 442, chap. 285.

⁵ I base my ideas about political theology on Oliver O’Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology* (Cambridge, 1996) and Kate Langdon Forhan, *The Political Theory of Christine de Pizan* (Aldershot, 2002). All references to Gerson’s works are taken from the 10-volume *Oeuvres complètes de Jean Gerson*, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, 1960–1973). Volume numbers and page references are inserted into the text itself. My analysis of the *Montaigne* is drawn from Brian Patrick McGuire’s introduction and notes to *Jean Gerson, Early Works* (New York, 1998) (hereafter *Montaigne*). I place page references to his translation, which is found on pages 75–127, within the body of my text.

⁶ Although initially addressed to Gerson’s sisters, this text was meant for, and soon attained, a much larger public, as pointed out by Daniel Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning* (Philadelphia, 2006), 189–90. For the use of the term see McGuire, *Jean Gerson, Early Works*, 399, n. 2.

⁷ I adopt the spelling of Monnica’s name suggested by Garry Wills, *Saint Augustine* (New York, 1999), 2, and which is confirmed by the majority of manuscripts of the *Confessions*.

Gerson's interpretation of the notion of the *seulette* orients our understanding of the meaning accorded to it by Mézières and by Christine, the preacher's ally in the debate about the *Roman de la Rose*. In addition to Gerson's treatises on contemplation, he promulgated the ideal of solitary contemplation in the more than sixty-four sermons he preached in French to Parisian congregations between 1389 and 1415.⁸ This ideal was not original to Gerson, but had its origins in monastic contemplation. The French monarchy adopted it as its own, associating it particularly with Charles V as a monarch in the line of Saint Louis and of the king's namesake Charlemagne. Mézières promotes this ideal in his *Songe* when he includes among the list of recommended readings for the young dauphin Charles VI the *City of God*, citing it as a text closely studied by Charlemagne.⁹ In the translations of the *City of God* and related texts commissioned expressly by Charles V for the benefit of his descendants, the translators refashioned Augustine's concept of the City of God according to the monarchy's evolving desires for contemporary society.¹⁰ The political theology of the time was heavily invested in encouraging the composition of visionary texts like Augustine's.¹¹ Immortalized by Christine as the quintessential "Wise King" in her biography of him, Charles personified an ideal of wisdom attained through contemplation, piety, and study that she, Gerson, and Mézières promoted as practices designed to help solve present-day problems. That practice had to be assumed not only by writers like themselves, but also by all the ordinary Christians to whom Gerson directed his sermons. Christine extended Gerson's concern to reach all social levels in texts such as her *Trois Vertus* and *Livre de Policie*, in which she addressed all members of the body politic.

⁸ On Gerson's sermons, see Louis Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français* (Bruges, 1952).

⁹ *Songe* 2: 223, chap. 229.

¹⁰ The prologue to the French translation of the *Policraticus*, commissioned by Charles V and bearing his image as "master translator" (see below), makes special mention of Charlemagne's love for the *City of God*.

¹¹ See Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378–1417* (University Park, 2006), for the large number of authors composing "visionary" texts dealing with the Schism.

PERSONAL AND LITERARY CONTACTS BETWEEN THE THREE FIGURES

Mézières was born about thirty-six years before Christine. The two apparently knew each other well, although we have scant knowledge about actual contacts between them. One hard fact is that on 14 November 1392, the recently widowed Christine, to help settle her debts, sold him her castle at Mémorant, which originally had been given to her father by Charles V, and other property at Perthes and Etreilles.¹² Mézières's association with Christine's family dates back to her father Thomas de Pizan, with whom he was on friendly terms even though he had reservations about his competency as royal advisor.¹³ In his *Songe* he comments on the limitations of Thomas's use of astrology. In the first place, Thomas would often make incorrect predictions about small matters.¹⁴ But in a more wide-ranging critique of his methodology, Mézières, citing the church doctors and Aristotle, claims that Thomas should have concentrated on trying to grasp overall patterns in the movements of fortune, and that astrology was not the most appropriate approach to such analysis.¹⁵ Jean-Marie Picherit speculates that Christine never mentioned Mézières by name because he had made these disparaging comments about her father. He also

¹² Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre des fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V*, ed. Suzanne Solente, 2 vols. (Paris, 1936, 1940), 1: xviii, lxxx (hereafter-Charles V). See Charity Cannon Willard, *Christine de Pizan: Her Life and Works: A Biography* (New York, 1984), 23, 40. Christine's castle was located near Melun, in the department of Seine-et-Marne. I have always wondered what Mézières did with these properties, since at this time he was living in the Celestine abbey in Paris, to which he had retired after Charles V's death in 1380. Coopland, *Songe*, 1: xiii, n. 11, presents evidence that Mézières did not reside permanently at the abbey.

¹³ Mézières says of him: "O quantes fois Thomas de Bouloigne a cestui petit jugement failly et fu deceu." [Oh how many times has Thomas de Boulogne failed and been disappointed in the small judgments he made], *Songe*, 1: 614–15, chap. 156. See Willard, *Christine de Pizan*, 19, 103.

¹⁴ Willard, *Christine de Pizan*, 22. Thomas's reputation came under question after his death. As explained by Jan R. Veenstra, *Magic and Divination at the Courts of Burgundy and France: Text and Context of Laurens Pignon's 'Contre les Devineurs' 1411* (New York, 1998), 81–85, astrology, promoted by Charles V as a means of understanding the true significance of history, had come under strong attack in early fifteenth-century Paris through its association with sorcery and court scandals.

¹⁵ Mézières is referring to Nicole Oresme's translations of the *Ethics* and *Politics*. He calls Oresme "that wise philosopher and theologian," and recommends his translations of the *Ethics* and *Politics* to the "young Moses," Charles VI, see *Songe* 2:223, chap. 229. Consult the index for Mézières's other references to Oresme.

comments that it is not unconceivable that Mézières knew Christine's husband Etienne de Castel.¹⁶

To add to the discussion of Mézières's criticisms of Thomas, in her *Mutacion de Fortune* of 1403 Christine avoids making the same mistakes that Mézières had ascribed to her father. Instead of relying on astrology, she bases herself in large measure on the translations done for Charles V and on the Church doctors, in particular as Gerson interpreted these sources in his role as chancellor of the University of Paris. The logic here seems to be that if Christine expects her readers to correct their faults, she must, in all humility, heed the advice that had been given to another member of her family by an esteemed royal advisor. So we have a first hint that Mézières entered quite closely into Christine's thinking.

Marie-Josèphe Pinet's claim that Mézières was connected to Christine through Eustache Deschamps deserves to be developed.¹⁷ Not mentioned by Pinet is that Mézières recommends his works to the young dauphin Charles VI in his *Songe*.¹⁸ In a letter dated 10 February 1404 Christine registers a critique of contemporary mores similar to the one Mézières had lodged almost two decades earlier. Deschamps writes back to Christine to praise her learning, comparing it to her father's. He plays on her self-characterization as the *seulette* (she writes the letter, she says, "all alone in my study") to commend her for being "alone in [her] accomplishments in the kingdom of France." Deschamps makes it sound as if Thomas has been rehabilitated by his daughter's achievements.

Another indication of Mézières's possible importance for Christine is that there is a good chance he served as one of the oral sources for her biography of Charles V along with her father and husband. Suzanne Solente, the biography's editor, cites Pinet's opinion that Christine would have learned from him what she says there about the life and death of Peter of Lusignan (1359–1369),¹⁹ whose chancellor Mézières had been during Peter's term as king of Cyprus and Jerusalem.

¹⁶ Jean-Louis Picherit, "De Philippe de Mézières à Christine de Pizan," *Le Moyen Français* 13 (1983), 22.

¹⁷ Marie-Josèphe Pinet, *Christine de Pisan 1364–1430: Etude biographique et littéraire* (1927; rpt. Geneva, 1974), 405–6, cited by Picherit, "De Philippe," 21–22.

¹⁸ *Songe* 2:223, chap. 229.

¹⁹ Solente, *Charles V*, 1: lxxx, refers to Pinet, *Christine de Pisan*, 107, n. 2: "De plus, il est possible que Christine tienne de Philippe de Mézières, si renseigné à ce sujet, tout ce qu'elle dit sur la vie et la mort de Pierre de Lusignan." Idem, 1: lxxx, n. 4, agrees

I believe that Christine drew upon Mézières's memories of Charles V's dying moments to compose her scene of the events. My hypothesis is prompted by the comment made by the renowned Gerson scholar Max Lieberman that Mézières was present when Charles V died.²⁰ The possibility that Christine used Mézières as a source for the deathbed scene to which she devotes so much space receives bolstering from Christine's description of her oral sources:

Me suis informée tant par cronique, comme par pluseurs gens notables encore vivants, jadis ses serviteurs, de sa vie, condicions, meurs et ordre de vivre, et de ses fais particuliers.²¹ [I have informed myself as much through chronicles as by several notable people still alive today [who were] formerly among those who served him, about his life, conditions, behavior, ordering of his way of life, and of his particular deeds; 1:3, p. 9]²²

Mézières corresponds closely to the description given by Christine. He was an important person who was still alive at the time when she composed her biography ("gens notables encore vivants"). Mézières died on 29 May 1405; and he had acted as one of Charles V's most faithful advisors, even going into monastic semi-retirement after Charles V's death. A good friend to Bureau de la Rivière and his wife, as was Christine, Mézières even dedicated two works to them.²³ Christine records Charles V expiring "with sobs and spasms" in Bureau's arms.²⁴ Another reason to believe that Mézières served as one of Christine's sources for the king's deathbed scene, in which Charles judges his royal

with Pinet that he could have served as one of Christine's sources, "mais nous n'en avons aucune preuve."

²⁰ Charles V died on 16 September 1380. Max Lieberman, "Chronologie gersonienne (Suite): IX: Jean Gerson and Philippe de Mézières," *Romania* 81 (1960), 338–79.

²¹ *Charles V*, 1:3, page 9; cited in Solente's introduction, 1: xxxvii.

²² Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

²³ The first was *Le Pelerinage du Povre Pelerin et Reconfort de son Pere et de sa Mere*. Mézières identifies Bureau and his wife as his spiritual parents in his prologue, 1:85. The second book was *The Little Pilgrimage of the Poor Pilgrim*, which Mézières addressed to Bureau after his restoration to royal favor in 1384. Since the second book (like the first) is lost, and Mézières does not comment upon the second in his prologue, we do not know if he dedicated it to Bureau's wife as well. But based upon the references to both of them that he makes in the *Songe*, it does seem to be a probable inference; Coopland, *Songe*, Introduction, 1:14.

²⁴ For a discussion of Christine's use of oral sources, see Lori J. Walters "Constructing Reputations: *Fama* and Memory in *Charles V* and *L'Advison-Cristine*," *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, eds. Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail (Ithaca, 2003), 118–42.

crown to be inferior to the crown of thorns, is that Christine's depiction of it is in line with Mézières' conception of the Chevalerie de la Passion de Jésus-Christ.²⁵ It is hard to imagine that Mézières, Charles's close friend and counselor, would not have been present when he died, and that he would not have been willing and able to give Christine eyewitness testimony to what he observed there.²⁶

Other parallels between Mézières and Christine indicate that they share a similar mindset. It has been noted that Christine borrows the character of "Droiture" in her *Cité des Dames* from Mézières's *Songe*.²⁷ Another parallel between the two is evident in her last work, the *Ditié de Jeanne d'Arc*, in which she restates Mézières's project of the Christian re-conquest of the Holy Land, allying it with Merlin's prophecies, as had Mézières in his *Epistre au roi Richart*.²⁸ But Picherit cites as the major literary connection between Christine and Mézières her use, in her *Cité des Dames*, of his translation of Petrarch's Latin story of Griselda.²⁹ This scholar also deals with the way Christine and Mézières come together on their defense of marriage and married women and on the preeminent place that each accords to the Virgin Mary.³⁰ Although Picherit's analysis of these two points deserves further

²⁵ For information on Mézières, see the notice written by Sylvie Lefèvre in the *Dictionnaire des Lettres Françaises (Le Moyen Age)*, eds. Geneviève Hasenohr and Michel Zink (1964; Paris, 1992), 1144–1146. Also helpful are the comments of Bernard Guenée, *Between Church and State, The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago, 1991), 108–111, 114, 117, 146–49, 160–61, 184–85, 214–15, 224–25, 228–29. Note that Lefèvre seriously entertains the idea the Mézières was the inspiration behind the composition of the interlude performed at the banquet that Charles V organized in honor of the Holy Roman Emperor, his cousin Charles IV. On this interlude, see Lori J. Walters, "Performing the Nation: Christine de Pizan's Biography of Charles V & the Play Performed at the Great Feast," *Cultural Performances in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regalado*, ed. Eglal Doss-Quinby, E. Jane Burns and Bonnie Krueger (Woodbridge, 2007), 219–35.

²⁶ We can add that Charles's death in 1380 came at the beginning of the writer's most prolific period. He composed the majority of his texts between 1380 and 1397, the date of his last known French text, his *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*.

²⁷ Willard, *Christine de Pizan*, 137, 177.

²⁸ Mézières, *Epistre au roi Richart*, trans. Coopland, 14.

²⁹ Picherit, "De Philippe," 24–25. Picherit bases himself on Elie Golenistcheff-Koutousoff, *L'Histoire de Griseldis en France au XIV^e et au XV^e siècle* (Paris, 1933), 130, and Maureen Curnow, *Le Livre de la Cité des Dames of Christine de Pisan: A Critical Edition*, 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1975), 624–25.

³⁰ Anna Loba, "En chascun estat on se puet sauver qui veult": reflexion sur le mariage dans l'oeuvre de Christine de Pizan et Philippe de Mezieres," *Desireuse de plus avant enquerre...* Christine de Pizan 2006. Volume en homage à James Laidlaw, *Actes du VI^e colloque international sur Christine de Pizan* (Paris 20–24 juillet 2006), ed.

development, it will suffice to point out here the importance of the Virgin Mary as a moral and devotional model for Mézières, Christine, and Gerson, a point to be developed below.

Picherit also comments on the parallel trajectories of their life stories.³¹ Each begins with a secular period, occupied by Mézières's extensive travels and Christine's ten years of happiness as a wife and mother. Then comes a second stage when each works for royalty: Mézières as one of Charles V's most trusted advisors, Christine as advisor to the court of his successor Charles VI, for which she composed her biography of Charles V. Each passes a third stage of existence as a secular inhabitant of a royal monastery; Mézières, in the Celestine house in Paris; Christine in the Dominican house of Saint-Louis-de-Poissy, not far from the city.

As for the contacts between Gerson and Mézières, it is hard to determine the extent of actual meetings between the two. Lieberman deduces that they were fast friends of long date. Given that Mézières resided with the Parisian Celestines for a quarter century, from 1380 until his death in 1405, a wealth of information about Gerson would have been available to him. According to Daniel Hobbins, the best place to find a work by Gerson during his lifetime was in a Celestine monastery in France.³² It is also significant that two of Gerson's brothers, Nicolas (b. 1382) and Jean (1385–1434), were Celestine monks. Gerson was particularly close to Jean. Prior of the Celestine house in Lyon around the time Gerson began living in exile there, Jean assumed major responsibility for the editing and diffusion of his brother's works.³³ Given the large part played by the Celestines in the diffusion of Gerson's texts, it can be assumed that the relations, both real and ideological, between Gerson and Mézières would have been especially close.

Lieberman makes a strong case for believing that the "noble et religieux seigneur et pere en Jhesu Crist" [noble and religious lord and father in Jesus Christ] to whom Gerson addressed a letter was in fact Mezières.³⁴ He painstakingly reconstructs the circumstances of the

Liliane Dulac, Anne Paupert, Christine Reno and Bernard Ribémont (Paris, 2008), 291–302.

³¹ Picherit, "De Philippe," 24.

³² Hobbins, *Authorship*, 202.

³³ Hobbins, *Authorship*, 198 does point out that he was not the only one responsible for their diffusion.

³⁴ For a study of this letter by another scholar who accepts Lieberman's idea that Gerson addressed it to Mézières, see Scott Taylor, "L'aage plus fort ennaye": *Scientia*

letter. On 17 January 1403 (or 1405) Gerson went to the royal abbey of Saint-Antoine-des-Champs to celebrate the feast of the church's patron and to pronounce a sermon on one of his favorite subjects, the need for penitence.³⁵ The saint's feast day was also the anniversary of the death of Peter of Lusignan, which explains Mézières's presence at the event. From the letter's contents Lieberman surmises that at the event Mézières had begun a conversation with Gerson by praising one of his works.

But afterwards Mézières made the mistake of indulging in a piece of gossip. The day after the event Gerson composed the letter to let him know that such remarks were especially inappropriate for someone living in a monastery and who was an old man approaching his final days. This was not necessarily meant to be an insult. It was after all Mézières who had characterized himself as the *vieil solitaire* and *vieux pelerin* long before Gerson composed the letter. Gerson sent a copy of his *Science de bien mourir* (7:404–7) along with the letter for his correspondent's further edification and so that Mézières, who had a scriptorium at his disposal, could have it copied and distributed to others.³⁶ The idea here is that if Mézières admires Gerson's works, as he claims to do, he should read them more carefully. Gerson expects his advice to be followed. Judging these efforts to be insufficient, the next day Gerson sent along a copy of another text, *Pour qu'on refrène sa langue* (7:400–4; also referred as to the *Petit livre contre detraction*), which, as he says, he composed in a spirit of "brotherly instruction" for Mézières's "correction."³⁷

To those of us who might find Gerson's actions overbearing, to say the least, we should realize that he had not only the right, but also the duty, to correct others' actions and their texts. This letter is reminiscent of the one he sent to Pierre Col, in which he openly admonished him for some of the stances he had assumed in the *Rose* debate. As chancellor of the University of Paris and chief canon of Notre Dame cathedral, Gerson functioned as the supreme arbiter of Church doctrine.

mortis, Ars moriendi and Jean Gerson's Advice to an Old Man," *Old Age in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: interdisciplinary approaches to a neglected topic*, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin, 2007), 407–20.

³⁵ Lieberman, 367, says that the sermon was either the *Poenitemini* of 17 January 1403 or *Dedit illi scientiam sanctorum* of 17 January 1405, both pronounced in the church of Saint-Antoine-des-Champs.

³⁶ Lieberman, 356.

³⁷ Lieberman, 378.

He was the person whose obligation was “to supervise the doctrine of all that is said or written in the university world.”³⁸ In his *Songe* the Old Pilgrim says that he submits all he says to the correction of the University of Paris, “the treasury and illuminator of Gaul.”³⁹ Gerson’s job was to oversee all “doctrine,” which included the type of teaching done by Mézières.⁴⁰ Teachers’ instruction had to be certified by their behavior: in modern parlance, they had to “practice what they preached.” We can imagine that Mézières would not have found Gerson’s comments to him to be totally out of place.

In many ways, Christine takes on the task of healing the Schism and uniting the Christian princes that Mézières’s *Songe*, and later his *Epistre au roi Richart* and *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire* were unable to accomplish.⁴¹ In the *Songe* the author, who personifies himself as the Old Pilgrim and Ardent Desire, travels through the world accompanied by his sister Good Hope and the virtues Truth, Peace, Justice, and Mercy. To further his fervent wish that France be the privileged site for the minting of the “good coins” of moral action, he has the Virtues deliver a treatise about good government to the young and still mentally sound Charles VI. The *Songe*’s allegorical structure is recalled in two of Christine’s texts dating from 1402–1403, her *Mutacion de Fortune* (to be discussed below) and *Chemin de lonc estude*.⁴² In the

³⁸ The chancellery of the Church of Paris or of Notre-Dame is “une charge d’essence doctrinale [qui] donne à son titulaire le droit de conférer la licence d’enseigner et l’obligation de surveiller la doctrine de tout ce qui se dit ou s’écrit dans le monde universitaire” [in essence a doctrinal charge, which gives to the title holder the right to confer the teaching certificate and the obligation to supervise the doctrine of all that is said or written in the university world], cited by André Combes, *Jean de Montreuil et le chancelier Gerson. Contribution à l’histoire des rapports de l’humanisme et de la théologie en France au début du XV^e siècle* (Paris, 1942), 285–86.

³⁹ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 105, chap. 304; 2: 476, chap. 93.

⁴⁰ For a study of the French monarchy’s interest in controlling the instruction given by lay teachers, see Lori J. Walters, “Anthoine Vêrard’s Reframing of Christine de Pizan’s *Doctrine* for Anne de Bretagne,” *The Cultural and Political Patronage of Anne de Bretagne, Negotiating Convention in Books and Documents*, ed. Cynthia J. Brown (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2010), 47–63.

⁴¹ Daisy Delogu, “Public Displays of Affection: Love and Kinship in Philippe de Mézière’s *Epistre au roi Richart*,” *New Medieval Literatures* 8 (2006), 99–123.

⁴² Gianni Mombello, “Quelques aspects de la pensée politique de Christine de Pizan d’après ses œuvres publiées,” *Culture et politique en France à l’époque de l’humanisme et de la Renaissance*. Etudes réunies et présentées par Franco Simone (Turin, 1974), 62, n. 3, has noticed “a certain analogy” between the allegorical voyages of Christine’s *Mutacion de Fortune* and Mézières’s *Songe*. Picherit quotes Mombello in “De Philippe,” 21.

latter the narrator travels across the world to garner a message about the solution to France's problems, which she then delivers to the ruling King of France, Charles VI.

In her *Mutacion de Fortune* Christine presents herself as someone capable of assuming the task of reforming the country left unfinished by Mézières. In his *Songe* Mézières promotes the furthering of the will of Divine Providence. With this aim in mind he gives his approval to the monarch's choice of advisors who have demonstrated that they indeed deserve to belong to an "elect" inner royal circle. Mézières here suggests to his readers that he is a member of that circle. In her *Mutacion de Fortune* Christine implies that she too is a member. To show that divine providence rather than blind fortune rules the universe, she offers the example of the effect on her of her husband's death. Although this event originally appeared to have been the result of a fortuitous turn of Fortune's wheel, it ended up transforming her into a writer ideally suited to be a guide to royalty. What had originally appeared to her to be the effect of random fortune was actually the working out of God's will. But it was incumbent upon her to learn how to interpret events correctly. She came to understand how God had symbolically written the "text of her higher life" upon her suffering body. In her *Mutacion de Fortune* the author suggests that because she has learned how to understand divine workings in her own life, she can interpret those workings on a universal scale, which she demonstrates by her grasp of the patterns of world history. She thus implies that she deserves to belong to the inner circle of the monarchy's most trusted advisors. Subsequent events would confirm that Philip the Bold, the duke of Burgundy, interpreted her implicit claim in this way.

Christine tells us that the duke was so impressed by her *Mutacion de Fortune*, of which she had offered him a copy on 1 January 1403, that he commissioned Charles V's biography from her. He seems to have done so because he recognized that Christine was supporting his own project to create unity by adopting Mézières's unfulfilled objectives. Chief among them was the need to strengthen legitimate dynastic succession. In the final lines of the *Mutacion de Fortune* Christine suggests that the way to reinforce the royal line was for the king's brother, Louis of Orléans, together with his uncles, the dukes of Burgundy, Berry, and Bourbon, to promote the wise rule epitomized by Charles V by providing good counsel to the present king, his

mentally incapacitated son Charles VI.⁴³ This was indeed the course that Philip the Bold decided to take, especially since Louis of Orléans had failed to become his brother's main guardian, as Mézières had spelled out that role for him in the *Songe*.⁴⁴ Christine, so it seems, was writing herself into the position set forth by Mézières in the *Songe*'s final lines. The structure of this text is perhaps most tellingly recalled in the *Advision Cristine* of 1405, in which Christine's dire predictions about the realm's future additionally reflect Mézières's despondent state at his text's conclusion. It may not be mere coincidence that she brought the *Advision* to conclusion before Easter 1406, less than a year after Mézières's death. In her three dream visions, the *Mutacion*, *Chemin*, and *Advision*, Christine's texts whose allegorical structures and messages most closely recall the *Songe*, she sought to continue the efforts Mézières had failed to bring to fruition. Mézières, Christine, and Gerson are connected through Philip the Bold. Gerson had become his chaplain in 1393. Mézières, we recall, addressed his last French text to the duke in 1397, and Christine had come under Philip's patronage no later than in 1403.

The three writers were allied in their perception of the need for the reform of the individual and society and in their ideas concerning ways to bring it about. They have a common perception of the dire state of the kingdom and of Christendom. Creating unity in both was their overriding concern. The years 1337–1453 saw France and England involved in a series of military confrontations known as the Hundred Years War, which centered on the question of who should occupy the French throne. From 1378–1417 an ongoing and bitter Church Schism exacerbated France's problems. Mézières directed his efforts to the proper education of the dauphin and the reinforcement of dynastic succession, believing that these were the best ways to end the Schism and unify the country.⁴⁵ By the early fifteenth century, conditions in France and in Christendom had degenerated even further than in Mézières's heyday. Charles VI's mental illness, which declared itself in 1392, widened already existing internal divisions. Civil conflict broke out shortly after the assassination of Louis of Orléans in

⁴³ Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre de la Mutacion de Fortune*, ed. Suzanne Solente. 4 vols. SATF (Paris, 1959, 1964, 1966), 4:77–78, vv. 23539–84.

⁴⁴ Queen Truth outlines his duties to Louis, telling him, among other things, that he should act as his brother's mentor, *Songe*, 2:469, chap. 300.

⁴⁵ Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries*, 162.

1407. This in turn opened the way to invasion followed by almost a quarter century of occupation by the English. One approach to solving these problems shared by our three figures was to engage an ever-greater number of people in meditational exercises. These were meant to restore unity to the Church and to France by promoting individual and societal spiritual renewal.

In *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378–1417*, Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski dwells at length on the efforts to end the Schism by Mézières and Christine.⁴⁶ She relates their interventions to the previous involvement of laymen and women in expressing their dismay over earlier schismatic rifts in the church. I suggest that the idea behind the participation of these various groups of people was their belief that the Schism violated the rule of God within the Christian community.⁴⁷ Although admitting the difficulty of assessing whether the writings of members of the group of poets, saints, and visionaries had direct political influence, Blumenfeld-Kosinski convincingly argues that their importance lies elsewhere. I would characterize that “elsewhere” as the mental formulation of unity that people expressed in texts characterized by Blumenfeld-Kosinski as having a visionary quality. Behind these visionary texts lies a common meditative praxis, to which Gerson gives theoretical form in his *Montaigne* and to which he adds reflections on prayer in its companion piece, his *Mendicité spirituelle* (7:220–80). The spiritual exercises he describes have to do with the relationship between reading, study, contemplation, and prayer. People having the ability to write, preach, teach, or produce books would move from the insights they had obtained in contemplation to activity promoting their ideas in the public sphere. Following standard Catholic devotional practice, they counted on the prayers of others to assist them in securing the divine help deemed necessary to achieve political and spiritual unity.

⁴⁶ Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries*, 97–131, 150–63. She also treats Gerson and Deschamps; refer to the index for page references.

⁴⁷ To quote O'Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations*, 65: “The authority of a human regime mediates divine authority in a unitary structure, but is subject to the authority of law within the community, which bears independent witness to the divine command.” If regimes violate the individual consciences of their subjects, it is the common conscience that they violate most directly. The wrong they do is therefore a political wrong, attempting to override the rule of God within the community. I am grateful to François Dupuigrenet-Desroussilles, Professor in the Department of Religion at Florida State University, for his advice on this question.

THE *VIEIL SOLITAIRE* AND THE *SEULETTE* AS EXPRESSIONS OF A
CONTEMPLATIVE IDEAL

Judging from the preceding discussion it becomes clear that the most important thing about the relationship between Christine, Gerson, and Mézières was not their actual contacts, although these most certainly must have been frequent, but was instead their shared community of interests, what Eric Hicks, in speaking of Christine and Gerson, has called their "ideological complicity."⁴⁸ In her study of the *Grandes Chroniques de France* Anne D. Hedeman explains the complicity of the three by recognizing that Christine and Mézières shared Gerson's firm belief in the monarchy.⁴⁹ Accordingly, in the remainder of this paper I propose to examine the idea that their complicity is most evident in their adherence to an ideal in which contemplation is the motor force of their activities in the public realm.

Gerson provides the key to understanding how contemplative solitude figures in the political theology of the day. He actively worked to heal the wounds in France and in Christendom through his writings, his preaching, and his negotiations before and during the Council of Constance of 1417 that brought the Schism to a close. The concept underlying all his activities is the importance of the Word in creating unity in the "corpus mysticus" and the individual and societal groups descending analogously from it (Christendom, the individual national monarchies, the individuals composing those monarchies). He expresses this idea most clearly in his *Vivat Rex* sermon (7:1137–85), whose theme was the desired reformation of the kingdom. It has been noted that Christine's *Advision Cristine* of 1405 and some of her later political writings bear the marked influence of this sermon.⁵⁰

In his *Montaigne* Gerson facilitates the movement toward the increasing involvement of laypeople in contemplative practices by translating into the vernacular the governing concepts of the contemplative tracts of Gregory the Great, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Richard of St. Victor. Basing himself on their texts, he sketches out a three-part

⁴⁸ *Christine de Pisan, Jean Gerson, Jean de Montreuil, Gontier et Pierre Col: Le Débat sur le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Eric Hicks (Paris, 1977), Introduction, xlix.

⁴⁹ Anne D. Hedeman, *The Royal Image. Illustrations of the "Grandes Chroniques de France", 1274–1422* (Berkeley, 1991), 138–39.

⁵⁰ Willard, *Christine de Pisan*, 156: "she was once more making common cause with Jean Gerson, her collaborator in the *Rose* debate."

plan for proper contemplation: humble repentance, the discovery of a secret place for contemplation, and determined perseverance. This plan of visionary ascent, he tells us, corresponds to the hierarchy of the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Gerson envisions contemplation as a practice to follow the repentance necessary to redeem the collective guilt believed to be responsible for the problems plaguing France and Christendom. There was a common perception that Charles VI's mental illness and France's failures on the battlefield were evils visited on France because of her moral failings.

Gerson often expresses the theme of repentance in sermons in which he promotes the *seulette* model. A prime example is his sermon on the Annunciation, his *Ave Maria* of 25 March 1397 (7:538–49), whose theme was court ethics.⁵¹ The *seulette* appears in a list of remedies for vices. Gerson instructs his audience to avoid being idle, as did Mary, who labored or worked or studied when she was not sleeping or eating; to avoid strong wine and highly spiced food; to avoid empty conversation. It is at this point that Gerson mentions the *seulette*: “L’angle trouva Nostre Dame comme dit saint Bernard, toute *seulette* en sa chambre, non mie parlant a Berthe ou a Gaultier” [The angel found Our Lady, as says St. Bernard, all alone in her room, not speaking to Bertha or Walter] (7:546). With these words Gerson emphasizes that when Gabriel arrived, Mary was alone reading rather than being involved in idle chatter or in spreading gossip.

Gerson returns to the figure of the *seulette* in his Good Friday sermon of 13 April 1403, his *Ad Deum vadit* (7:449–519), a reflection on John 19:25–27. This sermon completed his series, *Poenitimini* (the title means “Repent and be saved”), on one of his favorite subjects, the need for repentance by all members of society. In the major part of the sermon Gerson refers to the condemned Christ as the *seulet*, who is treated as an outcast, a thief, and a murderer. Christ's sufferings are reflected in the eyes of his mother, who would be recognizable to his audience as the *seulette* from earlier sermons such as the *Ave Maria*. Gerson refers directly to the *seulette* when, in the collation to the sermon, he describes the dinner after the Crucifixion:

⁵¹ Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, 112. Although in an earlier article Mourin had suggested that Gerson might have pronounced this sermon in 1398, in this work he revises the date to 1397. I thank McGuire for his advice on the dating of Gerson's sermons. See Brian Patrick McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, 2005), 82, for a discussion of this sermon.

En la parfin Nostre Dame se retrahi *seulette* en sa chambrette et en son oratoire secret apres que graces furent dictes et qu'elle eut commande a Dieu saint Jehan, sa bonne garde, qui se retrahi en une autre chambrette a part. [At the end Notre Dame retired all alone to her little room and her secret oratory after grace had been said and [after] she had commanded to God St. John, her good guardian, who retired to another small secluded chamber] (7:518).

Gerson describes the Virgin and St. John whom Christ, from the cross, had presented to her as her surrogate son (John 19:25–27), retiring to separate *chambrettes* to remain in contemplation until the resurrection.⁵² If John and Mary had traditionally functioned as models for male and female monastics, Gerson in his sermon extends those models to all the faithful to whom he addresses his French preaching.⁵³

Along with the general public, the preacher expects Mézières to conform to the *seulette* model. Although in his letter to him Gerson does not employ the term *seulette*, he nevertheless suggests that his correspondent should conform to the contemplative pose that he had described in the sermons described above. And he expects even greater adherence to this ideal by Mézières, given that he resides in a monastery. In his letter Gerson does not mention avoiding idleness and excess in food and drink, which are things that someone living in a Celestine monastery would shun as a matter of course. Instead he makes a strong case against spreading gossip, indeed a much stronger case than a modern-day person might find warranted. This is because defamation of another person was considered to be of prime importance in medieval society, and because refraining from repeating gossip was an essential component of the contemplative model.⁵⁴ In his letter Gerson refers to Mézières's state of retirement from the world by saying that in order to come to a state of perfection, he had shunned a worldly existence by espousing the solitary state of a monk. In warning

⁵² All biblical references are to the Douay-Rheims translation, *The Holy Bible translated from the Latin Vulgate* (Baltimore, 1899; repr. Rockford, 1971). They correspond to those in the *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatem Versionem*, ed. Bonifatius Fischer (Stuttgart, 1983).

⁵³ St. John, was, after all, Gerson's patron saint, and the preacher often represents his own sermonizing as proceeding from a contemplative state. Gerson will further exploit the parallels between himself and the evangelist and visionary in his great epic poem, his *Josephina* of 1417.

⁵⁴ See the essays in Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail, eds., *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2003).

his correspondent against dangerous conversations, Gerson recalls the advice he had given to the general public in his *Ave Maria* sermon.

Gerson returns to the same themes in *Pour qu'on refrène sa langue*, one of the texts he sent along with his letter to Mézières. That text begins in this way: "Se aucun se repute religieux, comme dit saint Jacques, et il ne met frain en sa langue, sa religion est vaine. Pourquoy vaine? Pource qu'elle n'actaint point à sa fin qui est mourir au monde pour vivre à Dieu et pour venir en paradis"⁵⁵ [If anyone calls himself religious, as says St. Jacques, and he does not curb his tongue, his religion is vain. Why vain? It is vain because it does not attain its goal of dying to the world to live in God and come to paradise [...]](7:400). Gerson renders a harsh judgment: if a monk or nun fails to bridle their tongue, then they have assumed their religious vocations in vain.

In his letter Gerson also recommends to Mézières that he have a cleric read devotional texts or saints' lives aloud to him, which was necessary because his eyesight was failing.⁵⁶ This corresponds to the advice given by Gerson in his *Ave Maria* and his *Montaigne*, where he implies that the reading of devotional works is an indispensable aid to correct contemplation. For her part, Christine in her *Trois Vertus* (1, 11) recommends that royal ladies read and reflect upon devotional literature. Noteworthy too is that in the *Rose Debate* Gerson and Christine expressed similar concerns about the way in which images accompanying texts or produced by reading them could either be positive or negative meditational aids.⁵⁷ The two employed the *seulette* figure as a device to instruct their audiences in correct reading and devotional practices.

Gerson's use of the figure of the *seulette* in his *Ad Deum vadit* sermon reveals that the preacher proposes both male and female models for contemplation to the French court. Gerson and Christine both make themselves over in conformity to these models. Christine establishes her persona as a *seulette* as a counterpoint to Gerson's male model. Whereas he represents himself as a second "John," as befits someone with his given name, she represents herself as a second "Mary," a

⁵⁵ Cited by Lieberman, 370, from the edition of the text by E. Vansteenbergh, *Revue des sciences religieuses* 15 (1935), 554–66, here 558.

⁵⁶ Lieberman, 358.

⁵⁷ For a succinct overview of the Debate, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Jean Gerson and the Debate on the *Romance of the Rose*," *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden, 2006), 317–56.

female figure of Christ in his suffering and penitential humanity. She establishes this point in her *Mutacion de Fortune* when she glosses her given name as “the name of the most perfect man, Christ, plus INE.”⁵⁸ Gerson and Christine set themselves up as intermediary models of correct contemplation for their respective audiences. They are living presences reflecting the saintly figures of John and Mary. Gerson and Christine function as more approachable guides for human self-improvement in the mould of these sacred models.

Many (if not all) of Christine’s texts have a contemplative and devotional cast similar to Mézières’s and Gerson’s. That cast is evident in the use of the *seulette* as a figure, as a concept, and as an image of herself that Christine places (or has placed by an associate) in a good many of the manuscripts of her texts that she produces in her scriptorium.⁵⁹ As for Gerson, time and again he presents his vernacular treatises and sermons as products of contemplation achieved in the “secret parlement” of his heart, mind, or soul. In *Montaigne* 7:39 Gerson likens the meditative ascent to a dream state. His description pertains particularly well to the *Songe*’s dream structure that frames Mézières’s contemplative vision. Many of the texts of Christine and Gerson could be described as dreams “dreamed in contemplation,” a phrase used by Mézières to characterize his *Epistre au roi Richart*.⁶⁰

As has been noted above, Mary was one of the most important moral and devotional models for Mézières, Christine, and Gerson. Mézières worked tirelessly to institute a Feast of the Presentation of the Virgin. Representing himself as the spouse of Lady Solitude, he presents his *Songe* as the recounting of a meditation he performed on his knees before the altar of the Virgin in the Celestine monastery in Paris.⁶¹ In his prologue (1:89) Mézières reveals that the Virgin provided the inspiration for the visionary frame that structures his entire narrative. He saw in the Virgin a moral and devotional compass for humankind’s mortal pilgrimage and for the recounting of that pilgrimage in visionary texts. Mézières’s Virgin, like Christine’s and Gerson’s, is at once the joyful Virgin Annunciate and the sorrowful Virgin of the Crucifixion. On Golgotha, Mary is, in Mézières’s words, “brune et

⁵⁸ Christine de Pizan, *Mutacion de Fortune*, 1:19–20, vv. 376–78.

⁵⁹ For a list of the presentation copies of Christine’s manuscripts, see <http://www.pizan.lib.ed.ac.uk/present.html>

⁶⁰ Mézières, *Epistre au roi Richart*, trans. Coopland, 27.

⁶¹ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 86, Prologue: “Solitude [...] qu’il avoit prinse et espousee.”

noyre par la douleur de la Passion de son Filz” [brown and black from the sorrows of her son’s Passion].⁶² The sufferings she experienced while witnessing her son’s torture were so great that her complexion seem to darken. Gerson, who in his *Montaigne* 7:47 recommended inducing contemplation by imitating the Virgin’s anguished witness, appears to have inherited Mézières’s deeply passionate devotion to the Virgin, as did his *Rose* debate ally, Christine.⁶³

The similar ways in which Christine and Gerson employ the *seulette* can be seen by comparing her *Cent Balades* 11 and 14 to Gerson’s *Méditation sur l’Ascension* (7: 390–93). Christine constructs her most famous poem, her *CB* 11, on the obsessive and melopoetic repetition of the phrase “Seulette sui” [Alone am I], which she further reinforces by the refrain: “Seulette sui, sanz ami demourée” [Alone am I, remaining without a friend].⁶⁴ In the first twenty-one verses Christine builds up to an overwhelming expression of human grief, its most immediate cause being the death of husband Etienne de Castel, which had taken place over a decade earlier, in 1389. But in the *envoi* she takes her grief even further, her sorrows seemingly attaining cosmic proportions, coming to mimic those of the great female figure of human suffering, the Virgin as witness to the Passion. She conveys this impression to her readers in her verses 24 and 25. When Christine represents her persona “de tout deuil menaciée” [threatened with all mourning] and “plus tainte que morée” [darker than the darkest blue], her *imitatio Mariae* approaches the character and intensity of Mézières’s. Her phrasing can even make us wonder if she did not have in mind his earlier depiction of Mary.

⁶² Mézières, *Songe* 1: 558, chap. 125. See the discussion of Dora M. Bell, *Etude sur le ‘Songe du vieil pèlerin’ de Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405) D’après le manuscrit français B.N. 22542; document historique et moral du règne de Charles V* (Geneva, 1955), 104. Man is attracted by his desire for the lodestone (*la pierre d’aimant*), which symbolizes the Virgin.

⁶³ See Isabelle Fabre, *La doctrine du Chant du Coeur de Jean de Gerson* (Paris, 2005), in particular her chapter, “La Canticordum instrument de dévotion mariale,” 185–203. The “song of the heart” refers to Mary’s Magnificat, which traces the itinerary of the Christian’s pilgrimage to God. On Christine’s use of the Magnificat and other references to the Virgin, see Lori J. Walters, “Magnifying the Lord: Prophetic Voice in *La Cité des Dames*,” *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales* 13 (2006), 239–53.

⁶⁴ Since London, British Library, Harley 4431 represents Christine’s own most authoritative “edition” of her texts, I am citing the transcription of these poems from the website: <http://www.pizan.lib.ed.ac.uk>

Christine further intensifies the comparison between her sufferings and Mary's by opening her *CB* 14 with the verses: "Seulete m'a laissé en grant martyre, / En ce desert monde plein de tristee [He left me all alone in great martyrdom, / In this desert world full of sorrow](1-4). Gerson couches his lament in *Méditation sur l'Ascension* in remarkably similar terms. The heart's desire for the presence of the celestial groom, Christ, makes her "gemir plaindre et plourer quand je me voy seulete desconfortee en ce present exil, en ceste vale obscure et tenebreuse, en ce desert horrible plain de toute adversité, de toute misere et infelicité" [moan, complain, and cry, when I see myself all alone in this present exile, in this dark and cloudy valley, in this horrible desert full of all adversity, of all misery and unhappiness] (7:391). Gerson speaks with the voice of a feminine orphan and disconsolate widow, as he projects his spirit into the text, testifying to his transformation. But the text becomes a mirror for the reader, so that she/he can experience a transformation based upon its mournful template. To my mind the network of echoes going from Mézières to Gerson and Christine is the greatest proof of their "ideological complicity." In a linkage spanning several generations, each does his or her all to knit together the country and all Christendom through a similarly conceived *imitatio*, which they communicate to others through their exemplary texts, teachings, and personal conduct, and which they communicate to God in their prayers.

Gerson projects himself into the figure of the *cuer seulet* in his *Pratique du psalterium mystique* (7:421-3). It should be noted that the decision to use either the term *seulet* or *seulette* depends upon the gender of the referent. In the *Ad Deum vadit*, Mary is the *seulette* whereas Christ, and by extension, Saint John, is the *seulet*; the soul, feminine in French, is *seulette*; the heart, which is masculine, is *seulet*. In his *Pratique du psalterium mystique* Gerson portrays an inner drama in which his heart cries out to be comforted: "Ung cuer seulet mis en esmay crie souvent" [a lonely heart cries out often in dismay] (7:421). In response, a personified Comfort sends an "escriptel" (a short piece of writing) from on high to comfort the lonely heart. The text in question is revealed to be a psalm, as the comforted *cuer seulet* sings the "new song" of Psalm 144. Thanks to the meditative praxis of the *cuer seulet*, the worldly soul ("cuer mondain") mounts through the degrees and becomes a theological soul ("cuer theologien"), which tries to put its teachings into universal practice. Gerson thus promotes mystical theology for everyone, as he "translates" Latin-based monas-

tic concepts into French in order to have them encompass as large an audience as possible. The basis for many of these concepts was found in Augustine's *Explanations of the Psalms*, which had formed the blueprint for monastic meditation for over a thousand years.

The contemplative and penitential stance recommended by Gerson and which we saw assumed by himself, Mézières, and Christine, was in fact one characteristic of Charles V, for whom Mézières had acted as a chief advisor and about whom Christine had composed a biography.⁶⁵ The monarch's meditative pose is illustrated in the opening miniatures of the 1372 translation of John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* undertaken by the Franciscan Denis Foulechat at Charles's request. In the picture found on fol. 2 of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 24,287, the hand of God appears out of a cloud to bless Charles as he points to the words inscribed in a book open before him. The line, "Beatus homo qui invenit sapientiam" [Happy is the man who had found wisdom] is a cognate to the "beatus vir" of Psalms 1:1.⁶⁶ The "blessed man" was supposedly David, one of the major models of the ideal French monarch, along with his son the wise king Solomon. As the person who commissioned an extensive translation campaign, Charles V represents the author-as-translator, the king who harnesses divine wisdom for monarchical ends. The hand of God indicates Charles's divine mandate. He puts God's wishes into effect through the didactic gesture of his own right hand as he reads the psalms and emphasizes their significance to the observer. The images reflect the fact that the reigning translation model was biblical, which corresponds to the list of authorities Christine enumerates in *Charles V* 3, 12 and to the psalm-like slant of the poetry of both Christine and Gerson.⁶⁷

Although the picture of Charles V looks very much like a typical author portrait, it is anything but typical, since the king was not known to have been a writer. He did, however, compose one prayer,

⁶⁵ For an overview of the depiction of Charles V as a wise king, see Carol Richter Sherman, "Representations of Charles V of France (1338–1380) as a Wise Ruler," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 2 (1971), 83–96.

⁶⁶ Eric Hicks and Thérèse Moreau reproduce this image on the cover of their *Livre des Faits et Bonnes Meurs du roi Charles V le Sage* (Paris, 1997); it is Figure 12 of Marcia Kupfer's article, "...lectres....plus vrayes: Hebrew Script and Jewish Witness in the Mandeville Manuscript of Charles V," *Speculum* 83.1 (January 2008), 108.

⁶⁷ Lori J. Walters, "Gerson and Christine, Poets," *Poetry, Knowledge and Community in Late Medieval France*, eds. Rebecca Dixon and Finn E. Sinclair (Cambridge, 2008), 69–81.

which was preserved by the cardinal of Amiens, Jean de la Grange.⁶⁸ It is significant that Charles V authored a prayer. According to Christian thinking, the ultimate union of France and of Christendom would come about through everyone's prayers for common causes. As the symbolic head of the kingdom, and Christ's representative on earth, Charles simulated the prayerful pose he expected to be imitated by all his loyal subjects as they strove to realize shared goals of peace and unity within the individual and larger body politic.

When we compare Charles V's depiction as a Davidic king to Christine's own self-representation as the *seulette*, we can easily see how the latter conforms to a similar model. Christine places herself in the role of a counselor providing wisdom and eloquence to her royal advisees. By exercising contemplative practices in her solitary study, Christine receives the wisdom that enables her to compose works that were to be taken seriously by her readers. In lines 139–140 of the gloss that Christine adds to the final and definitive copy of the *Advision*, she defines herself as the servant of "sainte Sapience divine."⁶⁹ In this way she likens herself to a follower of her patron Charles V by assuming the same studious pose he does in order to further his attempts to harness divine wisdom for the public good.

Christine did so, I believe, because she wanted her self-image as an exemplary advisor to be interpreted as conforming to the Davidic models that represented the most authoritative guides for France's hereditary monarchy. Christine furthermore represents this Davidic, penitential, and contemplative model in images illustrating presentation copies of her *Sept psaumes allégorisés* of 1409, copies of which she offered to the duke of Berry and to John the Fearless.⁷⁰ In both cases the opening illustration, the manuscript's only miniature, portrays King David involved in solitary prayer and contemplation. David was a penitential model of salvation for all Christians. Christine implicitly calls upon the duke of Berry and John the Fearless, the son of the now

⁶⁸ Françoise Autrand, "La Prière de Charles V," *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France*, année 1995 (1996), 37–68.

⁶⁹ Dulac and Reno, xli, note that the preface shows the influence of Mézières and Gerson: "Les nombreux commentaires allégoriques de la préface trahissent l'influence des contemporains, notamment Philippe de Mézières et Jean Gerson, sur le système allégorique de Christine..."

⁷⁰ The presentation copies are respectively Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, nouv. acq. fr. 4792, produced for the duke of Berry and Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, fr. 10987 produced for John the Fearless.

deceased Philip the Bold, to assume a penitential pose for the benefit of the French people, at a time when civil war was tearing the country apart.

Like David, Christine becomes a watchperson over the public good. She suggests this self-image in *Othéa* 67 by quoting the words pronounced by David in Psalm 101, the most famous of the penitential psalms: "Vigilavi et factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto" [I have watched and have become a lonely sparrow on the rooftops] (Ps. 101.8), a line she goes on to gloss in her *Sept Psaumes allégorisés*.⁷¹ So saying, Christine places herself in the role of a female David, acting as a solitary watchperson for humanity. This model is penitential, because David only became society's vigilant moral guide by virtue of having repented of his sins of adultery and murder. With her self-image as the *seulette*, Christine imitates the contemplative and penitential stance of one of the most important monarchical exemplars, the figure whose prayers had formed the basis of the monastic psalter and the layperson's Book of Hours. She returns to her self-imagining as civic "watchperson" in her *Duc des Vrais Amants* and *Trois Vertus*, both composed in 1405. In these two texts Christine's alter ego of Sibyl de la Haute Tour assumes the role of advisor to the kingdom's great ladies. This role complements the author's function in the *Mutacion de Fortune* as guide to the "princes de la haulte tour" [princes of the high tower] (v. 23610).

Royal princes and writer/advisors like Christine were all well-connected people who spoke out and acted for the public good. Occupying high social positions, they nonetheless depended upon the common people for prayer to ensure the efficacy of their efforts toward peace and unity. Prayers were a common feature of Christine's texts. Her *Sept Psaumes allégorisés* is an extended prayer on the seven penitential psalms pronounced by David; her *Heures de Contemplacion sur la Passion Nostre Seigneur* a meditation inspired by the Hours of the Virgin forming the heart of the Book of Hours. Christine expressed her concerns about the Schism and France's divisions in her *Oroyson Nostre Dame*, linking them through the poem's refrain to the prayer,

⁷¹ Christine de Pizan, *Epistre Othea*, ed. Gabriella Parussa (Geneva, 1999), 294; see Lori J. Walters, "The Royal Vernacular: Poet and Patron in Christine de Pizan's *Sept Psaumes allégorisés* and *Charles V*," *The Vernacular Spirit: Essays on Medieval Religious Literature*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Duncan Robertson, and Nancy Warren. (New York, 2002), 145–82.

the *Ave Maria*. In her *Oroyson Nostre Seigneur*, she connects her own newly composed prayer to the most universally recited prayer in Christendom, the *Pater Noster*. Similarly, she ends books 2 and 3 of her *Cité des Dames* with short prayers, and she caps book 3, chapter 10 with an even longer prayer to her patron saint.

Gerson clarifies the relationship between the *seulette* and prayer in the final lines of the *Mendicité*. There he recites a prayer in which he asks the Virgin and the Archangel Gabriel to take his heart or soul, the *seullette desolee* to God (7:269):

Vierge glorieuse, certaine esperance et refuge singulier dez pecheurs, et vous mon bon angle, et aucun des benois sains de paradis, soies lors a mon aide. Soyez pour moy deffendre et consoler; acompaignez lors ceste *seulette* desolee, et la presentez a dextre devant la face du sovereign juge soubz vostre proteccion. [Glorious Virgin, true hope and singular refuge of sinners, and you my good angel, and every one of the blessed saints of paradise, come now to my aid. Defend and console me; accompany then this desolate lonely heart/soul, and present it under your protection to the right of the face of the sovereign judge.]

When he asks the Lord to enter “dedens l’ostel de vostre petite et humble ancelle, de votre povre vaisselette” [into the house of your small and humble handmaid, of your poor little vessel] (7:277), Gerson assumes the stance of the Virgin Annunciate. His prayerful pose recalls Mézières’s framing of his *Songe*, in which he expressed the hope that the Virgin would exercise her traditional role as *mediatrix* by presenting her son with the poet’s petition for peace and unity within France and all Christendom. Nothing demonstrates the “ideological complicity” of our three figures better than their shared figure of the *seulette*. The passage quoted above reveals that this figure represents the individual heart or soul that in contemplation strives to transform the realities of self and community into more spiritual entities engaged in pilgrimage toward the final union with the godhead at the end of time.

It also becomes clear that the *seulette* is a figure of the watchperson, a Davidic individual who, after repenting of his/her sins, accedes to a higher meditative state in which he/she watches over the rest of humanity.⁷² David bequeathed the product of his meditation to others in the psalms, which were available to the fourteenth and fifteenth-

⁷² I develop the image of the “watchperson” in my “Gerson and Christine, Poets,” 77.

century faithful in the Psalter and Book of Hours. These books provided the medieval Everyman and Everywoman with models for their own meditative trajectories toward the divine. The Virgin and Saint John the Evangelist were potent related models. Mary was David's descendant who had chosen not to commit a mortal sin and who witnessed Christ's Passion, of which the Vulgate's Psalm 21 was the prefiguration. John was designed to be Christ's spiritual son at the Crucifixion, where the evangelist witnessed the Passion alongside the Virgin. Figures such as Mézières, Gerson, and Christine reproduced these penitential and devotional models to a greater extent than the ordinary faithful because of their ability to express their spiritual trajectories in verbal form and to have them preserved for later generations. Blumenfeld-Kosinski presents examples of non-Church officials, and even some "ordinary citizens" who were also able to style themselves as society's "watchpersons," precisely, I would suggest, by imitating the stances of figures already identified as "watchpersons" in Catholic devotional practice. One well-known example was Joan of Arc, whose mission received support from both Christine and Gerson. By referring to her as a simple maid and shepherdess throughout her *Ditié de Jeanne d'Arc*, Christine tacitly acknowledged the Davidic and Marian origins of Joan's self-fashioning as France's appointed savior.⁷³

In conclusion let me note that it was incumbent upon all such "watchpersons" to continue to monitor their own behavior and their writings in accordance with the Church's teachings. As chancellor of the University of Paris, it was Gerson's responsibility to correct others' texts and their conduct. In this paper, I have shown how Gerson guides Mézières in terms of the ideal of the *seulette* that he set forth for all the faithful in his French sermons and tracts on contemplation. But neither Mézières, nor Christine, nor even Gerson himself was exempt from the Church's "correction." Despite their elevated moral status, all three had to follow the advice they offered to others. Like their moral and devotional exemplar the Virgin, they were to remain humble towards divine and ecclesiastical authority. The examples I have considered here illustrate the fact that for Mézières, Gerson, and Christine, reformation of the greater body politic had to begin with the moral reformation of all of its members. This study suggests that

⁷³ Christine de Pizan, *Le Ditié de Jeanne d'Arc*, ed. Angus J. Kennedy and Kenneth Varty (Oxford, 1977).

all three believed that such reformation could only come about if the greatest possible number of individuals, and ideally each and every member of society, adopted the contemplative and penitential pose of the *seulette*. This was the same pose they themselves had assumed in order to gain the authority necessary to instruct others in the ways of contemplation and in the exemplary conduct that such contemplative practices were expected to produce.

POLITICS AS SPIRITUAL ALLEGORY

HOW TO BECOME THE “ROY DES FRANS”:
THE PERFORMANCE OF KINGSHIP IN PHILIPPE DE
MÉZIÈRES’S *LE SONGE DU VIEIL PELERIN*

Daisy Delogu

The fourteenth-century knight, crusading propagandist, and royal advisor Philippe de Mézières was a prolific writer who combined a vast first-hand knowledge of warfare and politics with a degree of erudition that permitted him to become one of the foremost political theorists of his day. As was not unusual for a younger son from a family of modest nobility, Philippe spent his career in the chivalric service of a series of prominent European noblemen, eventually settling at the court of Charles V of France, where he became a valued advisor to the king and tutor of the young dauphin, the future Charles VI. Following Charles V’s death in 1380, Philippe retired to the monastery of the Celestines where he remained until his own death in 1405. Despite his apparent retreat from public life, Philippe continued to be devoted to Charles VI and involved in political affairs, as illustrated by his completion of *Le songe du vieil pelerin* in 1389, shortly after the young Charles VI had assumed his personal rule.¹

As its title suggests, the *Songe* is representative of the much-appreciated late medieval genre known as the dream vision. Peopled by allegorical interlocutors, such texts provided a space for consolation, condemnation, and advice, and were often politically-oriented.² The *Songe* is divided into three books. In the first the narrator, identified as the Old Pilgrim, is visited by Divine Providence, who sets him upon a journey to find those who mint good money. Accompanied by Queen Truth and her ladies, the Old Pilgrim visits all parts of the known world in search of *bons besants*. The narrator explains to his extradiegetic public that the metaphor of good currency provides “une

¹ See Nicolas Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405) et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896).

² The classic references are Christiane Marchello-Nizia, “Entre l’histoire et la poétique: le ‘songe politique,’” *Revue des Sciences Humaines* 183 (1981), 39–53 and Jeannine Quillet, “Songes et songeries dans l’art politique au XIV^e siècle,” *Les Études Philosophiques* 3 (1975), 327–49.

nouvelle maniere de parler et tracter des vices et des vertuz" [a new way to talk about and discuss vices and virtues] (1:96, prologue).³ In addition, we shall see that the circulation of sound currency stands for all that defines exemplary kingship because "en foy morale, en verite et en reverence, la monnoye royalle represente la royalle mageste" [in moral faith, in truth, and in reverence, the royal coinage represents the royal majesty] (2:371, chap. 269). Accordingly, concerns about fiscal policy recur throughout books two and three, in which the quest for good coinage is apparently sidelined by the metaphors of the ship and the chessboard, respectively. In book two the travelers arrive in Paris, where Truth questions the four hierarchies of French society about the misconduct and corruption that afflict the ship of the kingdom of France. In the final book Truth employs the metaphor of the chessboard to provide extensive and practical advice to Charles VI, here called the young Moses, regarding his personal conduct and governance of the kingdom.⁴ The *Songe* is a highly didactic work that combines a perceptive analysis of known political systems and governments, including that of France, with a blueprint for ideal rule to which Charles VI, the work's dedicatee and the object of the allegorical ladies' intradiegetic educative focus, should aspire.

I will approach Philippe's theory of kingship through the optic of the *roy naturel*. Some scholars have suggested that ideas of nature and the natural were employed in the later Middle Ages primarily as metaphors for political structures or concepts, or to designate the essence of a being or the fact of birth.⁵ Jacques Krynen has argued that "it is therefore demoted from Christian Aristotelianism and the sphere of legal philosophy that Nature takes its place in political thought."⁶ However, I propose that it is precisely through the discourse of the natural, and specifically the idea of the *roy naturel*, that Philippe engages

³ Citations are from *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, ed. G. W. Coopland, 2 vols. (London, 1969). Translations are my own.

⁴ Jacques de Cessoles's *Liber de moribus hominum ac officiis nobilium sive super ludo scaccorum*, later translated as the *Livre du jeu d'échecs ou la société idéale au Moyen Âge*, was a well-known late medieval text.

⁵ Alain Boureau, for instance, affirms that "la *natura* de la théologie médiévale désigne à la fois l'essence d'un être et l'événement de la naissance." See his "Droit naturel et abstraction judiciaire. Hypothèses sur la nature du droit médiéval" *Annales. Histoire, Sciences sociales* 57.6 (Nov–Dec 2002), 1463–88 at 1465.

⁶ Jacques Krynen, "Naturel. Essai sur l'argument de la nature dans la pensée politique française à la fin du Moyen Âge," *Journal des Savants* (April–June 1982), 169–90 at 172, translation mine.

with Aristotelian political philosophy. Aristotle's *Politics* and *Ethics* were translated into Latin in the mid-thirteenth century by William of Moerbeke, and his ideas were diffused and developed by Thomas Aquinas, Ptolemy of Lucca, Giles of Rome, and Peter of Auvergne, among others. One of the most important commentators of Aristotle, and the one to translate his *Politics*, *Economics*, and *Ethics* into the vernacular, was Philippe's contemporary at the court of Charles V, Nicole Oresme. Because Philippe cites Oresme as a key authority, I will focus on his works rather than other possible sources for Philippe's knowledge of Aristotelian concepts.⁷ I will argue that Philippe does not just refer to the Philosopher, as he was known in the Middle Ages, but that he actively modifies his Aristotelian sources in order to define natural kingship not only in terms of birth or essential qualities, but also, and paradoxically, as a process of acculturation and a continuous enactment of a certain kingly formation.

The terms *seigneur naturel* or *roy naturel* appear frequently in the *Songe*, and their first or primary meaning is the legitimate, by means of hereditary succession, lord of a kingdom or people. The Old Pilgrim proclaims his devotion to the “jeune Blanc Faucon, son naturel seigneur” [young white Falcon, his natural lord] (1:103, prologue) for instance, while the Flemish are reproached for their lack of loyalty towards their “seigneur naturel” [natural lord] (1:404, chap. 80).⁸ Yet this expression also suggests he who is naturally fit to rule on the basis of his qualities. As Aristotle explains at the opening of the *Livre de Politiques*, “celui qui peut devant veoir en sa pensee ce que est a faire, il a de nature principauté de dominacion” [he who is capable of thinking ahead about that which is to be done, he by nature has lordship and dominion] (46).⁹ Thus the phrase *roy naturel* has two distinct, though not mutually exclusive, referents, one related to birth and the other to actions or characteristics. Philippe's hope is that he who is

⁷ On Philippe's use of Oresme see Joël Blanchard, “Introduction,” *Le Songe du vieux pèlerin*, trans. Joël Blanchard (Paris, 2008), 9–88.

⁸ The *blanc faucon* is one of the many designations for Charles VI found in the *Songe*.

⁹ All citations are from *Le Livre de Politiques d'Aristote* by Maistre Nicole Oresme, ed. Albert Menut, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, N.S. 60.6 (Philadelphia, 1970). Oresme's translations of Aristotle are marked with a T while his own commentaries, or glosses, are marked with a G. For the purposes of this essay, where I cite Oresme I am referring to his commentary, while ideas attributed to Aristotle come from Oresme's translation, rather than to a modern critical edition of the *Politics*. Page numbers are provided in parentheses.

a *roy naturel* by virtue of his birth might also be—or become—fit to rule. In this essay I will first consider how natural kingship is related to a broader notion of governance to which Philippe refers using the terms *ministre* or *couronne*. These expressions allow Philippe to distinguish between the person of the king, and the exercise of kingship as the performance or application of an ideology, itself defined in part by the distinction between natural kingship and tyranny. I will then examine the evolution from Aristotle, through Nicole Oresme, to Philippe de Mézières, of a set of ideas about the types of rule, the relationship of ruler to ruled, and the opposition between free people and *serfs*. Finally, I will consider natural lordship as a status that pertains not just to the person of the king, but to a complex network of relationships between the king and his subjects. By redeploying a set of Aristotelian categories related to the common good, liberty, and *franchise*, Philippe shows that the natural lord and the subject are articulated in terms of one another, and that their identities are constantly subject to renegotiation.

Charles VI, or the young Moses, as he is called throughout much of the *Songe*, is indeed a *roy naturel* in the sense that he was born the legitimate king of France, but this is not enough to ensure good rule. In book three of the *Songe* Queen Truth says to the young Moses, “tu n’es pas esleu, sacre et conferme de mon Pere roy naturel du royaume de Gaule pour estre oyseux, ne pour faire tes propres et legieres volentez mains pesees, mais pour estre esveille et diligent d’exercer l’office de ministre du royaume de Gaule, c’est assavoir l’office de ta royalle mageste” [you are not chosen, anointed, and confirmed by my Father as the natural king of the kingdom of Gaul in order to be idle, or to carry out your personal and insignificant desires, but to be alert and diligent in exercising the office of the ministry of the kingdom of Gaul, that is to say, your royal majesty] (2:316, chap. 253). Being designated by God as the *roy naturel* is thus only a point of departure. Queen Truth distinguishes clearly between the king as an individual possessed of personal desires, and the function that he exercises, the *ministre du royaume de Gaule*, or the *office de ta royalle mageste*. Truth later reminds the king that he is not only a *roy naturel*, but also “ministre du royaume de Gaule; pour laquelle administracion il te fault diligemment travailler au bien publique du royaume et maintesfois laisser tes propres volentez” [minister of the kingdom of Gaul, in the administration of which you must work diligently towards the public good of the kingdom, and many times disregard your personal wishes]

(2:368, chap. 267). Here Truth employs the same distinction noted above between the *roy naturel* and the *ministre du royaume*, and she maps onto it another difference, that between the king's *propres volontez* and the Aristotelian notion of the *bien publique du royaume*. For Aristotle the main criterion that distinguishes the three good types of government from their three corrupted counterparts is precisely that in the former the rulers serve the common good, while in the latter the rulers are dedicated to their own interests. In order to govern well the *roy naturel* must act as the *ministre du royaume*, subordinating his personal desires to the needs of the kingdom.

The idea that the king is at once a natural person with individual desires, and a kind of institutional officer with obligations to the kingdom, is further communicated by Truth's distinction between king and crown. Truth reminds the young Moses that he has sworn "a la couronne de France" [to the crown of France] (2:323, chap. 254) to uphold justice, demonstrating that the king is beholden to something higher than himself. Like the king, the French people are similarly constituted as subjects by nature, once again of the crown: "tous ceulx generalment du royaume de Gaule sont subgiez naturelz a ta digne couronne" [all those generally of the kingdom of Gaul are the natural subjects of your worthy crown] (2:351, chap. 264). The personal bond between lord and vassal has been replaced by a new relationship in which the people are defined as the subjects of the crown. Thus the crown transcends king and subjects alike, and represents something that approaches the kingdom, in a geo-political sense, or the state. Truth further develops the association between the crown and the territory of the kingdom when she advises the king to make generous territorial concessions to the English in order to secure peace, "voire mais que ce ne soit de la vraye essence, honneur et gloire ancienne de la couronne de France, de laquelle...tu es ministre et ne le pues vendre, donner ou engaiger ou prejudice de la dicte couronne" [provided that it not be part of the true essence, honor and ancient glory of the crown of France of which you are minister and may not sell, give away, or otherwise encumber to the detriment of the aforesaid crown] (2:378, chap. 271). Here Truth articulates the theory of the inalienability of the kingdom, which posits that the kingdom is not a personal good that may be passed on, transferred, or divided according to the king's desires. Instead, the king is the custodian of the kingdom, here represented metonymically by the crown, which he must preserve and safeguard so that it may be transmitted in its entirety

to his legitimate heir.¹⁰ Coronation oaths, outlining the promises and obligations of the king, had been sworn for centuries as part of the rituals of anointing and coronation. However, Truth's language echoes and confirms a relatively recent clause concerning inalienability, one which was introduced into the ritual in the Ordo of Charles V, and which would be instrumental in orienting royal rule towards the systematic administration of the kingdom.¹¹

By insisting upon the ethical superiority of the *ministre du royaume* over the *roy naturel*, Philippe refuses to accord any inherent legitimacy to the king or his rule beyond that which originates from his birth. In order to become a *roy naturel* in the fullest sense of the term it is necessary also to govern well. As in the game of chess, a certain piece is designated king, but in order to function in the game that piece must move as a king.¹² The *Songe* advances the compelling paradox that a *roy naturel* is simultaneously something that one is, and that one becomes, the result of one's birth to be sure, but more importantly the consequence of a process of inculcation, and the ongoing enactment of this education.

The very existence of a large body of didactic literature directed at kings, including the *Songe* itself, shows that "natural" kingship is in fact not natural at all, but learned. The *Songe* stages a series of kingly educations: that of the tyrant from book three who, in learning to play chess, also learned the principles of good rule; that of the intradiegetic figure referred to as the young Moses, whose instruction by Truth and her ladies is the objective of book three, and that of the *Songe*'s dedicatee Charles VI himself, the ultimate target of Philippe de Mézières's educative efforts. The iterative nature of these scenes suggests that good kingship is never definitively acquired. Instead, the process of royal education must be repeated in each new generation, and it is the responsibility of wise figures such as the chess-teaching philosopher,

¹⁰ See Jacques Krynen on the idea that the crown is representative of a nascent notion of the state, in *Idéal du prince et pouvoir royal en France à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris, 1981), 306–08.

¹¹ See Carra Ferguson O'Meara, *Monarchy and Consent. The Coronation Book of Charles V of France* (London, 2001), 120–25.

¹² The idea of natural rule as a performative rather than an ontological condition is found also in Henry de Gauchy's translation of Giles of Rome, wherein we see that "cil est gouverneur naturel, qui n'establist ne ne commande for cen que loy et reson enseignent." See *Li Livres du gouvernement des rois. A XIIIth century French version of Egidio Colonna's Treatise De Regimine Principum now first published from the Kerr Ms*, ed. Samuel Paul Molenaer, (New York, 1966), 2.

Truth, and Philippe himself to provide the needed instruction. The *Songe* intervenes at a critical moment in the development of Charles VI and his rule, striving to capture his attention, heart, and mind, and to direct his actions towards the common good just as he is in the process of assuming his personal rule. The attitude of the young Moses towards his would-be preceptors provides a model for Charles VI, since both before the instructional allegory of the chessboard, and at the conclusion to the *Songe*, the king's textual analog is represented as enthusiastic and receptive to the teaching that the queens provide.

The *Songe* provides many directives for wise kingship, but it also sounds a cautionary note concerning the effects of injustice. At the conclusion to book two, having examined the contrary winds that buffet the ship of France and that prevent the forging of good money, Rectitude mentions the threat to good rule posed by astrology. In a long scene that recalls aspects of a debate or *disputatio* between University masters, the merits of astrology are upheld by Superstition, while its failings are demonstrated by Good Faith, the representative of the University of Paris. In her conclusion Good Faith cautions against fear of the heavens and its signs and influences. But, "il y a autres signes," she warns, "non pas du ciel mais politiques, qui font bien a doubter, c'est assavoir quant les patrons de la nef ou les princes selon le dit d'Aristote seurmectent a servitude tyrannique la nature et franche liberte des subgiez" [there are other signs, not heavenly but political, which are quite fearsome; that is to say when the leaders of the ship or the princes, according to Aristotle's text, subject to tyrannical servitude the nature and the freedom of the subjects] (1:619, chap. 160). The oppression of the French by their prince is tyrannical, and such conduct leads to the demise of the kingdom. In contrast, wise and prudent kings enjoy firm and stable rule. Good Faith's closing remarks suggest a set of connections between tyranny, the nature and the rights of subjects, and the concept of *franchise* that will be examined more fully in book three. Her intervention functions as the hinge between book two's acerbic critique of the administration of the kingdom, and the educative process intended to produce justice and equity that is depicted—and enacted—in book three.

The danger against which Good Faith and the queens try to guard the young Moses is one that inheres within the very structure of monarchical rule, namely that the king might not subordinate his personal desires to the needs of the kingdom and his people, such that his rule devolves into tyranny. The specter of tyranny haunts the idea of natural

kingship because the *roy naturel* is perpetually at risk of becoming his perverted analog, the tyrant. As Divine Providence says at the end of the *Songe*, when she is explaining how she administers justice in the world, “les roys naturelz, pour leur tyrannie et desordonnee vie, je leur oste leur royaume, et aucunesfois je le baille a leur propre serf ou a leurs ennemis” [I sometimes take away the kingdoms of natural kings on account of their tyranny and disordered lives, and sometimes I accord them to their own slave or to their enemies] (2:506, chap. 318). In order to teach the young Moses how to rule well and to “[le] garder de toute tyrannie” [safeguard him from all tyranny] (2:201, chap. 222) the three queens introduce the metaphor of the chessboard. On one hand the visual space of the chessboard constitutes a mnemonic organizational device.¹³ The chessboard is divided into four quadrants which each relate to an aspect of the king’s person or his rule, while each individual square provides a specific lesson. In some respects the education provided by means of the chessboard is quite conventional. It covers the usual territory of moral development and conduct of the king, respect for God and the institutional church, the fair and effective administration of justice. However it is also, as one comes to expect in the works of Philippe de Mézières, incredibly detailed with regard to practical matters. To cite just one example, the queens provide an innovative model for a nationalized lending service administered by the crown which would provide economic benefits, as well as the added spiritual benefit of rendering Jewish lenders—and Jews—superfluous. This combination of the abstract and the highly concrete is in evidence throughout book three, and informs Truth’s discussion of the *franchise* of the French people, as we shall see.

The game of chess also functions as a metaphor for kingship itself, and especially for the relational and dynamic structure within which king and subjects alike are defined. Truth explains to the young Moses that long ago a philosopher introduced the game of chess to a tyrannical king in order to show how the king, “se doit porter envers ses subgiez et les subgiez envers lui” [should behave towards his subjects, and his subjects towards him] (2:200, chap. 222).¹⁴ Ruler and ruled exist within and contribute to a system of governance which ensures the

¹³ See Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990).

¹⁴ Likewise, in the *Livre de Politiques* Nicole Oresme writes that “unez choses doit le prince au subject, et autres choses doit le subject au prince” (123).

freedom and the good of France. One of the principal characteristics of the tyrant, in contrast to the *roy naturel*, is that he does not respect the rights of his subjects. Tyrants lie and deceive others (2:196, chap. 221 and 2: 247, chap. 235), they are cruel and luxurious (2:240, chap. 234) and they oppress their people (2:242, chap. 234). Perhaps the quickest and surest route to tyranny, however, is the unauthorized appropriation of the subjects' material wealth. Philippe's representation of the profound link between the fiscal misadministration of the kingdom and tyranny is based, I argue, upon an Oresmian understanding of the political community and the relationship of ruler to ruled.

Nicole Oresme, the late fourteenth-century theologian and writer known for his translations and commentaries of Aristotle's *Politics*, *Ethics*, and *Economics* is one of Philippe's most important sources in the *Songe*. Aristotle was known in the Middle Ages as the preceptor of Alexander, and was one of the most recognized authorities on matters of political philosophy. He is referred to a number of times in the *Songe*, as in Good Faith's discussion of the transference of secular power, cited above. However in Truth's list of recommended reading material for the young Moses, though she alludes to Aristotle's works, the named authority is not the Philosopher, but *maistre Nichole Oresme*. Truth declares that above all the young Moses should "delicter de lire et estudier les deux livres solennelz que compousa le tressaige philosophe et theologien maistre Nichole Oresme de Lisieux...c'est assavoir les livres d'ethiques et de politiques, qui singulierement appartiennent a ta royale mageste pour ton gouvernement et le gouvernement de ton peuple" [delight in reading and studying the two serious books composed by the very wise philosopher and theologian, master Nicole Oresme of Liseux...that is to say the books of ethics and of politics, which singularly belong to your royal majesty for your government and that of your people] (2:222, chap. 229). Aristotle's ideas are more useful to the king translated into the French vernacular, and translated culturally, by means of Oresme's copious glosses, into the political idiom of late medieval France. Also included in Truth's recommended reading list are the book *Du Gouvernement des Princes*, Henry de Gauchy's French translation of Giles of Rome's treatise on kingship, the works of Titus Livy, Vegetius, and Seneca, the *Consolation of Philosophy* of Boethius, and the story of the crusader Godfrey of Bouillon, among others. A book that Truth does not name but which is essential to Philippe's opposition between tyranny and natural kingship is Oresme's *Traictié sur les monnoies*, to which we

shall return. The lessons in governance contained within these works as well as, it is implied, within the *Songe* itself, are essential to the development of the *roy naturel* into an effective *ministre du royaume*. These and similar books, as well as the University of Paris, upon which the Old Pilgrim calls in his epilogue to confirm or correct the *Songe*, are the means by which kings are taught how to rule.

The financial administration of the kingdom is taken up as part of the fourth quadrant of the chessboard, which describes the common good of the king and of his subjects, presumed to be in harmony with one another. The fifth square, for instance, discusses the services and the financial contributions that the king's subjects owe him, and those that he might rightfully require of them. Truth opens her discussion of this square with the observation that for some time the French subjects have been taxed—both fiscally and in terms of the sacrifices demanded of them—beyond their means, and this situation has led to unrest. Despite the “parfaicte amour” [perfect love] that your subjects bear you, Truth tells the young Moses, “toutesfois il se puet dire que se le pere de son propre filz vouldra avoir un service importable, le filz ne demourra pas bien contemps, combien qu’il servira son pere a son plain pouoir et oultre sa faculte” [nevertheless it can be said that if the father asks an importune service of his own son, the son will not be very pleased, however willingly he might serve his father, and even beyond his means] (2:385, chap. 273). The parallel that Truth draws between the father and his son, and the king and his subjects, places the *Songe* in dialogue with the *Livre de Politiques*, where Oresme affirms at the start of book one, chapter one, that “princey royal” [royal rule] such as that wielded by the king, originated in “princey paternel” [paternal rule] (47). Indeed the father is like a king, and the king like a father (71). Throughout this chapter, Truth will call upon a set of Aristotelian notions concerning freemen versus slaves, or in Oresme, *frans* and *serfs*. By means of his supplementary glosses Oresme shifts the focus of Book one of Aristotle’s *Politics* from natural slavery to the types of rule and of subject. Philippe, in turn, will make judicious use of Oresme’s *Livre de Politiques* in order to highlight the concept of *franchise*.

The *Politiques* opens with the claim that “un est par nature seigneur et a principauté, et l’autre est subject par nature” [one is by nature lord and has dominion, and the other is a subject by nature] (46), and this distinction is profitable to both “seigneur” [lord] and “serf” [slave] (46). This assertion would have been perfectly obvious to Oresme and his audience, as illustrated by Philippe de Mézières’s use of the expressions

"natural king" and "natural subjects" to designate those who, by virtue of their birth, find themselves legitimate rulers of kingdoms, or subjects of such kingdoms. However Oresme's substitution of the term *serf* in the second passage for *subject* in the first shows that in fact two different types of relationship are at issue in the *Livre de Politiques*: that between lord and subject on one hand, and that between master and slave on the other. While it would seem clear that being a subject within a political system and being the slave of another individual are not at all the same thing, in practice the *Livre de Politiques* seems constantly to slip from one to the other, and is inconsistent in its deployment of the terms *serf* and *subject*. Aristotle's primary concern in book one is the legitimacy of natural slavery.¹⁵ For Oresme the institution of slavery, which did not exist in medieval France as it did in ancient Greece, would have made little sense. However since Oresme's task is not simply to translate Aristotle, but also to render his ideas intelligible to his medieval public, he endeavors to account for the Philosopher's reflections on this topic. He does so within a Christian framework according to which all souls are equal before God, and in which sin—rather than the native inferiority of certain individuals—is the source of enslavement. In a long explanatory gloss Oresme affirms that "tout homme qui a usage de raison est franc par nature, car sa volenté ne est subjecte ne serve a quelcunque creature mes seulement a Dieu" [any man who has the use of reason is free by nature, for his will is not subject or enslaved to any creature but only to God] (59). Since God has endowed humankind with reason all are free by nature, however "ceulz qui sunt frans de nature se pevent faire serfs et mescheans par malvese acoutumance" [those who are free by nature can make themselves slaves and mean folk through bad habits] (54). While Oresme concedes that all rightly-ordered persons, i.e. those who are ruled by their intellect, are free, he specifies that "telz furent il ou commencement en l'estat de innocence" [such were they in the beginning, in the time of innocence] (59). In other words, universal natural freedom belongs to an irretrievable pre-lapsarian moment. In the fallen human

¹⁵ According to Nicholas Smith Aristotle's so-called defense of natural slavery was unsuccessful, since he "never explained why some human beings deserve to suffer continuing despotical rule." See his "Aristotle's Theory of Natural Slavery," in *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, ed. David Keyt and Fred Miller, (Oxford, 1991), 142–55 at 155, while for Wayne Ambler it was not a defense at all but a carefully-crafted *mise en question* of the institution of slavery. See his "Aristotle on Nature and Politics: The Case of Slavery," *Political Theory* 15.3 (1987), 390–410.

community to which Oresme and his readers belong, some people are free while others are enslaved. By redefining the basis of slavery such that it derives its meaning from Christian values, Oresme effectively shifts the focus of book one from the problem of slavery—both natural and institutionalized—to more fruitful terrain: the relationship between ruler and ruled, or lord and subject.

There are many different kinds of rule (*princey*), according to Aristotle, and of subjects (*subjections*), and it is better to have dominion over superior subjects (52). Oresme explains what makes a type of rule superior: “plus digne et plus excellent chose est estre prince et seigneur sus bons que sus malvés et sus nobles et sus frans que sus serfs” [it is a more worthy and a more excellent thing to be prince and lord over good people than over bad, and over noble and free people than over slaves] (52). Aristotle defines the type of rule that is being exercised on the basis of the nature of the subjects over whom power is wielded. Accordingly, political rule, *princey politique*, is exercised over free people, while despotic rule is wielded over slaves. In the government of the household (*yconomique*) three types of rule are exercised simultaneously: that of the head of household over his slaves, which is despotic rule, that of the father over his children (paternal rule) and that of the husband over his wife (nuptial rule). The last two are over free people, and therefore are not despotic.

Since the subjects in Oresme's post-lapsarian world are a diverse collective—some free and others enslaved by sin—they may be placed in parallel with the mixed population of the household. Like the head of household, the king exercises power over both free people and slaves, and his rule corresponds to Aristotle's category of royal rule. Oresme affirms that “policie royal est la tres melleur qui soit et est aussi comme regle et mesure des autres” [royal rule is the best that there is, and serves also as the benchmark and the measure for the others] (145). The corrupted or degenerated version of monarchy is tyranny, and this, Oresme says, is a “vile seigneurie” [vile lordship] (52) because all of the subjects are enslaved (*serfs*). Even if some subjects have forsaken their freedom through sin, how is it possible for an entire population to consist of slaves? In addition to the slavery brought about through sin, Oresme explains, individuals can also be enslaved as the result of conquest or law (i.e. they can be descended from those enslaved through conquest). Moreover, subjects can be enslaved by their lord. In his explanation of royal rule Oresme clarifies that the king governs for the good of his subjects, and “il lui sunt subjects de leur volenté” [they

are subject to him of their will], while the tyrant governs for his private good and “il opprime ses subjects par force et par violence *et tient en servitude contre leur volenté*” [he oppresses his subjects by force and by violence *and holds them in servitude against their will*] (146, emphasis added). In other words the tyrant, through violent oppression, can transform his free subjects into slaves. In the *Songe*, Philippe hones in on Oresme’s discussion of freedom or *franchise* and makes it into the keystone of an argument about natural kingship versus tyranny, and the manner in which lords and subjects mutually, and continuously, define one another. He exploits the multiple and connected meanings of the term *fran*, which can signify the French people or Franks, liberty in a broad sense, and also freedom from a specifically financial burden, in order to make a general argument about liberty, as well as a highly-specific argument about the administration of the kingdom’s finances, especially as they relate to the war with England.

We have observed that the fifth square of the chessboard establishes a connection to Book one of the *Politiques* by employing Aristotle’s comparison between the family and the polity. The *Politiques* continues to function as an important intertext in this section of the *Songe*, as Truth demonstrates how the king may transform his subjects’ freedom into servitude through fiscal mismanagement and oppression. Truth’s immediate aim in the fifth square is to quiet the murmurings of the people on one hand, and on the other the accusations that they are not adequately serving the royal majesty. To this end she seeks to clarify who owes what services to whom so that the king might “justement et sans glose estre appelle le noble roy des frans” [rightly and without explanation or justification be called the noble king of the Franks/of free people] (2:387, chap. 273).¹⁶ Truth’s argument hinges on her sophisticated deployment of the concept of *franchise*. Truth first specifies the circumstances in which the king may legitimately solicit the military support of his subjects. She rejects the theory of possession according to which the king may demand of his people any services he wishes, and the suggestion that the “loyaulte naturelle” [natural loyalty] of his subjects authorizes such conduct (2:389, chap. 273). On the contrary, she states, “ou tu es vray roy naturel et par grace des frans, ou tu es roy des serfs et des esclaves” [either you are a

¹⁶ In my translations, I provide both meanings of *frans* to highlight the way in which Philippe plays with the polysemy of this term.

true natural king by grace of free people, or you are a king of serfs and of slaves] (2:389, chap. 273). Truth employs the distinction between *frans* and *serfs*, familiar from the *Livre de Politiques*, to specify that a natural king rules over free people. Truth continues: “Se tu es roy des frans, comme tu es, ce que ne peuvent pas dire les autres roys de leurs subgiez, raisonnablement les Francoi, tes subgiez, vrais obeis-sans, et de fait et de nom doivent estre appelez frans” [If you are the king of free people/the Franks, which you are, and which is something other kings cannot say of their subjects, then it is reasonable that the French, your subjects, as true and obedient ones, ought in deed and in name to be called Franks/free] (2:389, chap. 273). In this passage Truth plays on the polysemy of the word *franc*. Other kings cannot call themselves king of the Franks on a literal level because they rule over other peoples. But more importantly, Truth highlights the special status of the French, the free people, who in deed and in name ought to be called *frans*. This is a reference to the legendary origins of the Franks and the etymology of their name, surely known to Philippe’s public but which he repeats in this chapter. Because of their stout military resistance to the Roman armies the earliest ancestors of the French “demourerent frans du trehu des Rommains, et furent frans appelez” [remained free of the tribute due the Romans, and were called free/Franks] (2:390, chap. 273). Thus the very name *frans*, used since Roman times to designate the French people, was given to them as a direct result of their hard-won freedom from fiscal oppression. If the young Moses is to remain king of the Franks in name and in deed, then his subjects must retain not only the name of Franks, but also the fiscal liberty that earned them their name in the first place.

Truth goes on to warn that “se par aucune possession royale contre leur volente ilz seront asserviz, en ce, Beau Filz, tu auroyes perdu la substance de ton nom et de ta gloire naturelle” [if by any act of royal possession your subjects are subjected against their will, in this way, fair son, you will have lost the substance of your name and your natural glory] (2:389, chap. 273). This passage shows that through fiscal injustice the king can divorce the essence of his being (*substance*) from his title (*nom*), thereby perpetrating a kind of fraud, or counterfeit. Truth’s words recall Oresme’s definition of the tyrant, he who holds his subjects “en servitude contre leur volenté” [in servitude against their will]. The violence evoked here is not carried out against the bodies of the subjects however, but against their material goods. In his representation of financial oppression as a form of violence that

constitutes tyranny Philippe is developing the ideas of Nicole Oresme, for whom fiscal misconduct, in particular the manipulation of the currency, constitutes an attack upon—indeed a subversion of—the political community.¹⁷ In his *Traictie de la première invention des monnoies*, composed c. 1355 and later translated into Latin by Oresme himself, Oresme explores the central question of whether the prince has the authority to alter the value of the currency (ii). Basing his analysis in part on Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Politics*, Oresme reviews the origins of money, the forging of coins, the ways in which coinage can be altered, and the effects of such changes on the community and on the prince. Although the prince, as a "personne publicque" [public person] (xix) is deputized by the community to mint money on behalf of all, Oresme states categorically and repeatedly that money does not belong to the prince, but to the community and to "ung chacun" [each person] (xiv) for the purpose of "la utilité commune" [the common use] (xvi).¹⁸

Unlike Aristotle, for whom currency is an art, Oresme attributes to coinage a certain naturalness in terms of its use. Although money in a material sense is not a form of natural wealth, inasmuch as coins do not sustain human life, nevertheless currency is "naturellement...ordonnée" [naturally ordered] for the good of the community and the "naturel usaige de la monnoie est qu'elle soit instrument à permuer et achecter les Richesses naturelles" [natural use of money is that it be an instrument to exchange and to buy natural riches] (xlix). Any manipulation of the currency is monstrous, a crime against nature and "contre l'institution naturelle de la monnoie" [against the natural institution of money] (xlix). The guarantor of the proper and natural circulation of money is, not surprisingly, the king, or as Philippe might say, the *roy naturel*. Oresme explains that when coins first were introduced they were counted and weighed before being exchanged, but to facilitate commerce the coinage was standardized, and each piece was named and stamped with an impression that was recognizable, and that guaranteed the metal content and the weight of the coin. This stamp was "signe de vérité" [a sign of authenticity] (xvii).¹⁹ As the one

¹⁷ See Peter Spufford, "Monetary Practice and Monetary Theory in Europe (12th–15th Centuries)," in *Moneda y Monedas en la Europa Medieval (siglos XII–XV)* (Pamplona, 2000), 53–86.

¹⁸ All citations are from *Traictie de la première invention des monnoies de Nicole Oresme*, ed. M.L. Wolowski (Paris, 1864). Translations are my own.

¹⁹ See also chapter 12 of the *Traictie* on the significance of this stamp.

authorized to mint money, the king was personally responsible for the validity of the coinage.²⁰ Moreover the king's own image was very often itself the "figure" [image] (xvii) stamped upon the coins as the sign of their authenticity. In both of these respects therefore the king represented a truth or a promise, that whoever might employ a given coin could do so in good faith, confident that signifier and signified were united in a coherent and meaningful sign. Like linguistic signs, coins circulate, permit exchange, are based on agreed upon conventions, and belong to the community. Counterfeit and fraud are therefore attacks upon the system of signs that make human community possible, attacks against the very possibility of truth.²¹ Philippe makes this connection between speech and coinage explicit when Truth affirms that "tout ainsi que la bouche du roy doit parferer parolles veritables et profitables... tout ainsi en la monnoye royale doit apparoir le vray alloy et bon metal d'or ou d'argent, en poys et en mesure" [just as the king's mouth should proffer truthful and profitable words... so too in the royal coinage the true alloy and good mixture of gold or of silver, in weight or in value, should be manifest] (2:371, chap. 269).

The thought that the king himself, he who ought to serve as the guarantor of the veracity of signs and thereby the possibility of exchange, might subvert the value of the coinage for his own profit, inspires horror in Oresme, and the term that returns again and again to characterize such an act is tyranny. The manipulation of the currency on the part of the king is "tyranniser et fait de parfait tyrant" [to tyrannize, and the act of a perfect tyrant] (xlvi), it is "tyrannique et frauduleuse" [tyrannical and fraudulent] (liii), the king "doit avoir horreur de telles tyrannies" [should be horrified by such tyrannical acts] (lviii). Altering the coinage entails the misappropriation of the wealth of the community as a whole, and of each individual who constitutes that community, for the private profit of the king. Such manipulation is a far more serious crime than usury or simply taxing the people beyond their means, because it is carried out not only against the will, but potentially without even the knowledge of the people. Thus the king who alters the coinage illustrates perfectly the two main characteristics of the tyrant. In response to the hypothetical suggestion that the com-

²⁰ See Jotham Parsons, "Money and Sovereignty in Early Modern France," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61.1 (2001), 59–79.

²¹ Oresme connects speech and community in the *Politiques* when he explains that a person living in isolation is imperfect because he cannot exercise one of the natural functions of humankind (48).

munity might authorize the king to alter the coinage, Oresme affirms that the "communaulté de cytoiens, laquelle naturellement est franche et tend à liberté, jamais scientement ne se submectroit à servitude, ou s'abaisseroit au joug de la puissance tyrannique" [the community of citizens, which naturally is free and tends towards liberty, would never knowingly submit itself to servitude, or lower itself beneath the yoke of tyrannical power] (lxxiii). As in the *Songe*, Oresme defines the subjects as naturally free, though vulnerable to oppression or enslavement by their lord.

In cases of financial oppression, whether of manipulation of the coinage as described by Oresme, or royal possession as discussed by Truth, it is not only the subjects who are transformed, from free people into slaves. The nature of the lord himself and the type of dominion he exercises are also redefined by such actions. As Truth concludes in her argument against royal possession, if the king were to extort money or goods from his subjects, "la gloire de ton nom tu perdroies et ne seroies plus appelle roy des frans, mais seroies reppute comme un tyrant" [you would lose the glory of your name and would no longer be called king of the Franks/free people, but would be known as a tyrant] (2:391, chap. 273). This is because, as we saw in the *Livre de Politiques*, the ruler of slaves is a tyrant. Ruler and ruled exist within a dialectic that allows—indeed requires—each to define the other. If the subjects are turned into *serfs*, then the king himself is no longer a *roy naturel* but its degenerated counterpart, the tyrant.

The relationally-defined identities of king and subjects traced above represent the final step in Philippe's conceptualization of a natural kingship that is only on the barest level about birth or essence, for natural kingship is not an ontological status but a performative one. It is actualized by an ideological construct of kingship, one that is very purposefully shaped by writers such as Philippe de Mézières himself, and those whom he cites and deploys in his works. This construct becomes the focus of an educative process, realized in the *Songe* by means of the allegory of the chessboard. In the passages analyzed above Truth both affirms on a theoretical level the freedom of the French subjects, and makes a very pointed argument about the financial administration of the French armies, the raising of taxes to prosecute the war with England, and the appropriate use of these funds which is not, as Truth states most adamantly, to maintain the lavish lifestyle of the wealthy nobles of the realm, but to pay the standing armies.

The allegory of the chessboard is a particularly apt one for Philippe. Unlike the metaphor of the ship used in book two, a static allegory

which is used to describe the conditions of the kingdom, the game of chess requires sustained judgment and decision-making on the part of the players in plotting their course of action. Each piece has a unique function and possibilities for movement, and each move transforms the conditions that determine subsequent play. Similarly natural kingship is not a status that can be achieved once and for all; on the contrary it reflects the on-going implementation of the values served by the education the king has undergone. Finally, as we see in Truth's discussion of the relationship between the financial administration of the kingdom and the freedom or servitude of the royal subjects, natural kingship is not a state or condition which lies exclusively within the purview of the king. Instead, natural kingship is relational. Like words within a language, chess pieces within a game, or coins within a system of exchange, natural kingship is defined by its relationship to other elements within the system of government, namely the subjects. If a ruler can transform his free subjects into slaves through violent oppression, so too the subjects' degradation impacts the status of the king, the very substance of his being, for the lord of *serfs* is not a king, but a tyrant.

It is clear that Philippe's use of terms such as *roy naturel*, *amour naturelle*, *subgiez naturelx* constitutes more than just a nod to Aristotelian thought. Indeed Philippe knows well and engages with Oresmian understandings and transfigurations of Aristotelian political concepts, notably those related to natural rule, the distinctions between *frans* and *serfs*, and between the king and the tyrant. In the *Songe* Philippe exploits the polysemy of the word *frans* in order to push Oresme's ideas about freedom towards a specific project of reform of the French financial and military administration, and also to conceptualize a system of government that defines the king on the basis of his place within a carefully-constructed and dynamic apparatus, one that includes officers, advisors and subjects. Thus a *roy naturel*, he who reigns legitimately by natural succession, is essential, but is not himself a guarantor of good rule. Instead, as the *Songe* shows us in its staging of the educative process, the *roy naturel* must transcend his status as an individual to become he who rules naturally, whose very identity as king relies upon his just treatment of his subjects and respect for their rights. As Truth says to the young Moses, be moderate and benevolent in what you ask of your subjects, for "*puissance ordonnee...fait les roys naturelx*" [for well-ordered power makes natural kings] (2:391, chap. 273).

THE FIGURE OF PETER I AND THE STATUS OF CYPRUS IN
LE SONGE DU VIEIL PELERIN: CRUSADE IDEOLOGY,
SALVATION HISTORY, AND AUTHORIAL
SELF-REPRESENTATION

Kevin Brownlee

In his extensive and wide-ranging historical allegory, *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, Philippe de Mézières reserves a special status—and a special role—for the Kingdom of Cyprus, ruled by a Francophone, Catholic court and nobility under the royal dynasty of the House of Lusignan, whose founder had purchased the island kingdom from Richard the Lionhearted in 1192, in the wake of the Third Crusade.¹

The special status of Cyprus in the *Songe* is directly linked to what for Philippe is a uniquely privileged time period: the reign of the great crusading figure, King Peter I of Lusignan (1359–69), whom Philippe served as Chancellor (1360–68). Among other crusade conquests by King Peter highlighted by the text, the culmination, from the collective point of view of the Christian West as articulated by Philippe-author, was the conquest of the key Egyptian port of Alexandria in 1365—one of the richest cities in the entire Mediterranean basin. The *Songe* presents this triumph of the crusading enterprise as having been quickly undermined by the treachery of King Peter's troops and of his putative allies, which forced him to withdraw from his prize shortly after its capture. Four years later (on the night of January 16–17, 1369) King Peter was assassinated by his own conspiratorial courtiers, with, it seems, at least the tacit support of his brother. The ensuing material decline of the Kingdom of Cyprus—due largely to internecine conflicts among factions of the nobility—culminated in the devastating sack of the key Cypriot port city of Famagusta by the Genoese, followed

¹ All citations are from the edition of G. W. Coopland, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1969), based on MS BnF fr. 22542. Page citations indicate first the pages in Coopland's edition; the second set of page numbers refer to the recent translation by Joël Blanchard, *Philippe de Mézières. Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008). Blanchard's translation is made from the best manuscript currently known, Arsenal 2682–2683, which is the base manuscript for the eagerly awaited new edition by Blanchard and Didier Kahn, forthcoming with Droz in Geneva.

by their capture and looting of Nicosia, and their occupation of large parts of the island in 1373.

In the *Songe*, Philippe-author (most often through the words of the intra-diegetic authority figure, Queen Truth) presents the Genoese as the new Canaanites, the new Philistines, whose attack on Cyprus constitutes God's just punishment of the Cypriotes (the new but failed Israelites) for the sin of murdering their king.

Within the overall context of the allegorical discourse of the *Songe*, Philippe de Mézières presents King Peter of Lusignan as a divinely chosen exemplary monarch. This exemplarity grounds the king in the historical-military reality of the Eastern Mediterranean in the 1360s, as well as that of Western Christendom, plus the Eastern Christian and the Muslim worlds of the same period. At the same time, Peter qua royal Christian *exemplum* is situated in the figural world of Biblical exegesis as a new Joshua, betrayed by the new, corrupted Cypriote Israelites, who thus have sinned against God in spectacularly extreme terms.

The entire allegorical dimension of Cyprus in the *Songe* is informed by what is presented as the *past* Golden Age of Cypriot crusading spirit incarnated in Peter of Lusignan. Among the consequences of King Peter's exemplarity as "pure and absolute crusader" was the Edenic material prosperity of the Cypriot past—linked to the peace, benevolence, and law that characterized the kingdom during his reign. Contrasted constantly with this allegorically and historically exemplary Cyprus is the pathetic state of the island kingdom in the *present* of the *Songe's* composition: 1386–89. The event that creates the rupture between the present, calamitous state of Cyprus and its recent past of plenitude and triumph (directly underwritten by Philippe de Mézière's Christian God) is King Peter's murder in 1369, and the only hope for the regeneration of the fallen kingdom of Cyprus is repentance for and expiation of this sin. Only then can the once mighty kingdom be reintegrated back into the ongoing drama of Christian world history—from the perspective of Philippe de Mézières in the *Songe*. As we shall see, the same kind of figural contrast obtains for France: the prosperity and the blessedness of the French past of the Vieil Pelerin's youth (especially under Charles V) contrasts with the fallen present of the young Charles VI.

At this point, it is important to note that the *Songe's* treatment of Cyprus involves two contrastive authorial self-representations. When Cyprus appears in Book I, the Vieil Pelerin functions as a character within the (allegorical) diegesis: as first-person witness to the (allegorical)

events of the plot. In the treatment of Cyprus in Books II and III, on the other hand, the Vieil Pelerin functions as an extra-diegetic witness to literal (i.e., factual, non-allegorical) historical events: a first-person witness to and participant in the historical reign of Peter I (in the Cypriot past). In this connection, therefore, the character called the Vieil Pelerin is linked to the extra-textual experience of the historical author figure, Philippe de Mézières.

At issue in the *Songe* as a whole is a multi-faceted authorial subjectivity: the first-person authorial voice, authoritatively narrating the story line, expressing opinions, making comments, and explaining/glossing the text beginning with the Prologue (as contrasted with Vérité qua authorial spokesperson); the first-person protagonist, who participates in the allegorical plot line, and is referred to as the Vieil Pelerin and as Ardent Desir, but periodically linked to the author figure, e.g., the "Vieil Pelerin, escriptvain de cestui Songe;"² the first-person witness to literal historical events, whose extra-textual experience is linked to that of the historical author figure Philippe de Mézières; the Vieil Pelerin's exemplary stories qua witness are often recounted by Vérité, who cites him explicitly.³

Keeping these multiple authorial subject positions in mind in the present essay, I will focus on three interrelated features of the *Songe*, concentrating initially on Book I, then moving on to Books II and III. First, the representation of Peter I, and, indeed, Cyprus itself, in terms of salvation history, necessarily combined with contemporary fourteenth-century Euro-Mediterranean history in all its material specificity. In this context, Cyprus is linked with France: implicitly in Book I; explicitly in Books II and III. The process and import of the linking of these two Christian kingdoms will be explored in detail.

² Book I, chap. 2: 253; 196.

³ For a taxonomy of the kinds of allegory used in the *Songe*, see Armand Strubel, "Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin et les transformations de l'allégorie au XIV^e siècle," *Perspectives médiévales* 6 (1980), 54–74. See in addition, Anouk De Wolf, "L'Allégorie en contexte: La mise en œuvre des personnifications dans le Songe du vieil pèlerin," *Le Moyen Français* 24–25 (1989), 251–63; Jeannine Quillet, "Figures allégoriques du Songe du vieil pèlerin de Philippe de Mézières," in Annie Cazenave and Jean-François Lyotard, eds., *L'Art des confins: Mélanges offerts à Maurice de Gandillac*, (Paris, 1985), 479–92; and Quillet, "Herméneutique et discours allégorique dans le Songe du Vieil Pelerin de Philippe de Mézières" in *Sprache und Erkenntnis im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1981), 1084–93. For allegory and typology in the *Songe*, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378–1417* (University Park, PA, 2006), esp. 107–09, 113–14.

Second, the key role that I suggest is played by Philippe's Dantean subtext, set in motion by the first explicit reference to the author of the *Divine Comedy* in French literature, in *Songe* Book I, chapter 39. In Books II and III, there are a number of suggestive possible evocations of the *Commedia*, which may be seen as reinforcing the link between the two works.

The third and final focus of the present essay involves what I see as the key role of figural typology in this connection, the four-fold allegory of Biblical exegesis involving the literal-historical sense of the Old Testament; the spiritual-allegorical sense of the New Testament; the moral sense of the "present"—that is, of historical "linear" time on earth, extending from the conclusion of the penultimate book of the New Testament (the Epistle of Jude the Apostle)—thus the conclusion of Christ's time on earth, extended by the Apostolic moment—to the moment just before the end of Christian history, i.e., the Book of Revelation; the eschatological sense, involving the time of the last things, the day of Judgment, the second coming of Christ, the end of time (of earthly, linear time)—as foretold in the Apocalypse.⁴

In the *Songe*, Philippe de Mézières presents fourteenth-century Mediterranean and European history as the exegetical moral sense, as constituting part of God's *other* book: the Book of Human History, which God "writes" in events. In the Bible, of course, God writes both in events and in words. The *Songe* as a whole is thus situated exegetically in the time between the Epistle of Jude and the Book of Revelation.

Let me give a single (and classic) illustrative example of how four-fold allegoresis works in terms of figural typology: Adam's fall, his sin in eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, is both literally and historically true, and, simultaneously, a pre-figuration of Christ's salvific passion, Christ on the Cross, which figurally fulfills Adam's transgression. Adam thus prefigures Christ, who fulfills Adam. The tree in the Garden of Eden prefigures the Cross, which fulfills

⁴ For the classic treatment of figural typology in the middle ages, see Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1959–64). See in addition, Erich Auerbach, "Figura" [1944], trans. Ralph Manheim, 11–76 in Auerbach, *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (Minneapolis, 1984); Robert Hollander, *Allegory in Dante's "Commedia"* (Princeton, 1969), 3–103; Ronald L. Martinez, "Allegory" in Richard Lansing, et al., eds., *The Dante Encyclopedia*, (2000), 24–34.

the tree. The sinful fruit hanging from the tree prefigures the salvific “fruit” of the Cross, Christ’s hanging body, etc.: thus the literal and the allegorical senses. The moral sense involves each individual Christian soul re-enacting its own *imitatio*, its own version of the Adam-Christ relationship. At the same time, these interior individual struggles and choices are linked to the working out of God’s plan in contemporary history—with “contemporary” being a shifter. For Philippe in the *Songe*, it is fourteenth-century European-Mediterranean history. Finally, the eschatological sense involves Christ as Judge fulfilling Christ as Redeemer, Who prefigures Him; and the final judgment of every individual human soul fulfilling the prefigurations of Adam’s sin, Christ’s redemption, and its own free-willed choices.

It is important to emphasize that the four components of figural typology are not levels, but senses. Thus, although the human mind perceives them sequentially, from the perspective of God they are simultaneous.

It is Philippe’s powerful deployment of figural typology in the *Songe* that enables (and authorizes) the French to function as the New Israelites, their leader to function as the New Moses, etc. Within the hermeneutic and ideological economy of the *Songe* as a whole, figural typology functions as part of a rich and complex interweaving of allegorical and figurative discourses—which is one of the work’s most outstanding features, as Joël Blanchard states in the introduction to his important new translation, emphasizing “la richesse de [son] invention allégorique, les fulgurances d’un énoncé apparemment déstructuré mais en fait parfaitement maîtrisé.”⁵ I understand and utilize the term “figurative” as opposed to “allegorical,” to indicate what Dante referred to as “allegory of the poets” (*Conv.* 2.2–4), that is, a discursive practice in which the literal level, rather than sense, is a fiction (“bella menzogna,” *Conv.* 2.3), which indicates figuratively, rather than figurally, an “allegorical” or spiritual sense, which is true. A prominent example in the *Songe* would be the great ship that signifies metaphorically, e.g., figuratively, France. In the present essay, I will not be treating Philippe’s use of this powerful and important discursive practice in the *Songe*.

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⁵ Blanchard, *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008), 52.

In Part One of the *Songe*, Philippe-author (most often through the words of the intra-diegetic authority figure, Queen Truth) presents the Genoese as the new Canaanites, the new Philistines, whose attack on Cyprus constitutes God's just punishment of the Cypriotes for the sin of murdering their king (chap. 40: 300; 251). I would like to move now to a brief consideration of the two key—and programmatic—representations of the exemplary king of Cyprus in Book I of the *Songe*. There, the author recounts the world journey within the dream undertaken by Philippe-protagonist, that is, the Old Pilgrim (or Ardant Desir) accompanied by his sister, the personification allegory Bonne Esperance, who have persuaded Queen Truth to re-enter the world with them, and to re-judge the fitness of humankind to receive her again, with the promise from Charity to re-enter the world if summoned, while Wisdom, the third divine personage, remains on the Holy Mountain. Queen Truth is accompanied by three further personification allegories, her royal sisters (Book I, chaps. 3–4): first, Paix, also called Allegresse or “Doulce Amour;” second, Misericorde, also called Amoureuse or “la Riche Precieuse;” and third, Justice, also called Bonne Adventure or “la Dame des Œuvres.”

The two scenes in which Cyprus is explicitly treated in the allegorical journey of Book I of the *Songe* both involve dramatic interventions in the plot-line by two figures of Old Women who signify Cyprus in the present of the work's composition.

The first of these occurs during the visit to Venice in Book 1 (chap. 23: 257–60; 200–04).⁶ Queen Verité, comforting the assembled Venetians, is suddenly interrupted by the arrival of a disheveled old woman, “une vieille dame...(qui)...es temps passez avoit nom Devocion, mais a present elle se faisoit appeller Desesperee” (ibid., 257; 200–01). This allegorical character figures the distressed Kingdom of Cyprus and the islands of the Aegean (esp. Rhodes), all menaced by the advancing power of Islam. Dame Desesperee begs Queen Truth to intervene in order to save these threatened, suffering Christian polities. Verité responds by contrasting her *past* sojourn in Cyprus with her *present* absence; the recent past of Cypriote crusader glory, political

⁶ The entire Venice visit in Book 1 includes all of chapters 22 and 23 (pages 254–60 and 197–204), as well as the beginning of chapter 24, when the departing Ladies give the city their “benediction.”

tranquility and material prosperity vs. the present state of failure, unrest and desolation. The past of virtuous crusader triumph and domestic material prosperity is epitomized by the reign of Peter I of Lusignan as King of Cyprus: “ung petit roy du champ d’Acheldemach [= Cyprus] faisoit trembler Egypte et Surie et lui rendoyt truage une partie de Turquie” (1: 258; 202). Verité explicitly presents the rupture between this glorious Cypriot past and its crisis- and poverty-plagued present as caused by the assassination of King Peter: “ilz tuerent en trahison leur protecteur, leur salvateur, le roy tresvaillant, et leur lige seigneur, le noble lyon appelle Pierre... dont la memoyre lamentable ou livre de tout pseudomme ne sera jamais effacee” (chap. 23, 259; 203–04). His death was not in battle against the enemies of the Faith, as was that of Judas Maccabeus and other biblical “holy warriors” to whom Peter is directly compared, but rather, the King of Cyprus was “occis en son lit, dormant, par ses propres freres et barons, desquelx il se fioit comme de lui mesmes.” As a result of this sin, Queen Truth and her sisters abandoned Cyprus, and “celui aujourdui qui gouverne le champ d’Acheldemach, le sang encores tout chault va decourant de ses mains” (chap. 23, 259; 204). The present of the time of Philippe’s composition of Book One of the *Songe* is roughly fifteen years after King Peter’s murder. The final component of this didactic model narrative looks toward the only positive future possible for the inhabitants of Cyprus (and especially its rulers): repentance and reform. Queen Truth instructs Dame Desesperee to tell the Cypriots: “qu’ilz facent penitence des grans pechiez passez et se gardent de renchoir,” in which case there will be hope for them: “Et peut ester que, apres mon grant voyage, nous les pourrons bien visiter, se nous sentirons qu’ilz se veulent amander.” Queen Truth closes with a final warning as she specifies that were it not for the prayers of Mercy (or “l’Amoureuse”), Cyprus—as well as Rhodes and all the other islands of the Archipelago—would have been already “en la possession des Thurcs, des Sarrazins et de la mesgnie de Mahommet” (chap. 23, 260; 204), as punishment for their sins.

The second of the two key interventions in the allegorical plot line of the journey of Book I of the *Songe* by an allegorical Old Women signifying Cyprus in the present of the story line occurs during the visit to Genoa recounted in Book I, Chapters 34 to 42, from the Ladies’ entrance into the city at the beginning of chap. 34 to their departure from it at the beginning of chapter 42.

This second (Genoa-situated) Cyprus sequence (chap. 39–40, 295–300; 245–51) opens as Queen Truth, having finished the “positive” part of her discourse to the Genoese is interrupted by the Old Pilgrim, who announces the arrival of a second allegorical messenger from Cyprus: “une ancienne dame massagiere...bien desconfortee.” Again, this messenger figure is described (and defined) from the outset by the dominant construct of extreme change between a positive (recuperable?) past and a negative present. The Old Pilgrim as narrator calls her a “dame de grant honneur, mais par grant pauvrete perdue avoit sa couleur” (chap. 39, 295, 245).

The Vieille Dame begins her speech by focusing on the devastating present, before turning to the glorious Crusader plenitude of the Cypriot past. She comes to Genoa (in the diegetic present) from “l’isle d’Acheldemach, qui vault autant a dire comme champ remply de sang, c’est l’isle de Chippre, royaume desole et de sang arouse.” Then, she immediately evokes the triumphant, successful days of King Peter: “anciennement et derrainement ou temps [du] tresvaillant Lyon, nostre roy de lacrimable et victorieuse memoyre” (ibid., 295; 245). Privileged absolutely in the presentation of the exemplary king is his identity as crusader, whose conquests of Muslim-held towns are presented as unqualified successes: he “droissa la banniere de l’Aignelet Occis par grand vertu et grace de vostre Pere ed la grant cite de Triple en Surie, en Alixandre, mere d’Egypte, en Sathalie la vieille, en Turquie, et en la grant cite de Leas en Armenie...” (ibid., 295; 245–46).⁷ The Edenic material prosperity of Cyprus during the reign of King Peter is explicitly presented as an effect of which the cause is the King’s crusader faith, virtue, and military conquests: “Pour lesquelles victoires nostre ysle estoit lors toute florie et de tous fruiz et d’aromaz remplye, et par espécial des nobles vignes d’Engardi, qui le precieux vin portoient, le quel vin moralisant les vertuz confortoit” (ibid., 295; 246).

At the same time, the Cyprus of King Peter functioned strategically in the Pan-Mediterranean project of Christian crusade, viewed simultaneously in geographical and spiritual terms. In the words of the

⁷ For a historical assessment of King Peter’s victories, see Peter Edbury, “The Crusading Policy of King Peter I of Cyprus, 1359–69” in P. M. Holt, ed., *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades* (Warminster, 1977), 90–105; idem, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), as well as Edbury’s and Konnari’s articles in this volume.

messenger to Queen Truth: "ceste nostre yslle estoit la noble chambre orientale et gracieux retrait des chevaliers de Dieu et des pelerins qui aloient oultre mer. Cest isle [*now*] mal fortunee estoit *lors* le vray mur defensible de la Crestiente d'orient. C'estoit comme ung gracieux hospital des Crestiens d'occident. Et briefment, c'estoit la frontiere puissante et necessaire de la Crestiente catholique.... c'estoit la banniere de la croix encontre les ennemis de la foy, plus redoubtee que nulle autre *en son temps* qui puet ester trouvee" (ibid., 295–6; 245–46; emphasis mine). It is important to note that—within the allegorical plot line of the World Journey of Book I of the *Songe*—Queen Truth and her holy entourage never visit Cyprus, which is thus implicitly, i.e., figurally, excluded from the temporal and geographic world of Christian history: held in suspension, as it were.⁸

It is at this point in the narrative that a second key historical event, linked to King Peter's assassination, is explicitly identified as separating Cyprus present from Cyprus past: the Genoese invasion of the island in 1373, with the destruction of the rich port of Famagusta, along with its large garrison and a significant part of its civilian inhabitants, and the sack of Nicosia, including its cathedral. The violent destruction effected by the Genoese is, above all, presented as an act of betrayal, "trahison."⁹ As a result of this betrayal, the brother of the murdered King Peter, that is, the former Prince John, became king of Cyprus. He is explicitly presented by the Old Woman as responsible for King

⁸ On this topic see the important article by Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, "Images littéraires de Chypre et évolution de l'esprit de croisade au XIV siècle," in Emmanuèle Baumgartner and Laurence Harf-Lancner, eds., *Progrès, réaction, décadence dans l'Occident médiéval* (Geneva, 2003), 123–35.

⁹ The Old Woman uses this term four times to designate the Genoese both at Famagusta in 1373 and at Alexandria in 1365, Book I, chapter 39, 296–98; Blanchard, 247–48. The religious dimension of the treachery of the Genoese is further emphasized by the fact that the Old Woman evokes Philippe-protagonist, conflated here with Philippe-author, as direct, historical witness to their treacherous, mercenary refusal to help King Peter at the battle of Alexandria ("en presence corporelle de cestui Vieil Pelerin escriptvain de cestui voyage," ibid., 298; 248). This is the only case in Book I's treatment of Cyprus where Philippe's authorial self-representation as historical witness, dominant in Books II and III, appears. It is reinforced almost immediately when the Old Woman evokes the extraordinary wealth and power of the port of Famagusta before the Genoese invasion, referring to that period as the "premier temps du Vieil Pelerin" (ibid., 298; 249). The net effect, I think, is to highlight Philippe-author as reader of Dante (thus further privileging the Dantean citation in Book I, chap. 39, discussed below) by linking him with the explicitly designated Philippe-author as historical witness.

Peter's murder: the fingers of his right hand drip with "le piteux sang humain du tresvaillant aïné frère" (chap. 39; 299; 250).

The entire passage of excoriation and condemnation of the Genoese people opens—in my view, quite significantly—with the first explicit reference to and citation of Dante in French literature.¹⁰ The Vieille Dame's denunciation opens with the following characterization: "...ceste generation genevoise, de tous ses voisins appellee perverse, laquelle selon le livre de Dante devoit ester du monde destruite et entierement dispersee" (chap. 39, 296; 246). The passage referred to comes from *Inferno*, 33: 151–53:

Ahi Genovesi, uomini diversi
d'ogne costume e pien d'ogne magagna,
perché non siete voi del mondo spersi?

[Ah Genoese! Men strange to all good custom and full of corruption, why are you not driven (dispersed?) from the earth.]¹¹

I would like to suggest that this reference and citation are not merely incidental in the *Songe*, but, rather, that this Dantean textual passage functions intertextually to produce meaning in Philippe's work.

First, this passage is both structurally and semantically over-determined in the *Commedia*. Dante-poet's condemnation of the Genoese concludes the thirty-third, and penultimate, canto of the *Inferno*, in which Dante and Virgil encounter the final human souls in Hell. Nothing remains to be seen except Satan himself, which takes place in the final, thirty-fourth, canto of the first *cantica*.

Second, Dante-poet's denunciation of the Genoese at the end of *Inferno* 33 is the culmination of a program of denunciations of Italian cities in lower Hell, the sixth in a series that begins in *Inferno* 18: 58–63 with a denunciation of Bologna in the voice of the sinner Venedico Caccianemico in the first *bolgia* (Seducers and Panderers) of the eighth circle (Fraud). The second denunciation, of Lucca, is by a "diavol

¹⁰ For the identification of this Dantean subtext, see Pierre-Yves Badel, *Cahiers de l'Association Internationales des Études Françaises* 23 (1971), 334; and idem, *Le "Roman de la Rose" au XIV^e siècle. Étude de la réception de l'œuvre* (Geneva, 1980), 385. See also Giuseppe Di Stefano, "Alan Chartier ambassadeur à Venise" in Franco Simone, ed., *Culture et politique en France à l'époque de l'humanisme et de la renaissance* (Turin, 1975), 165–66.

¹¹ The text is that of Giorgio Petrocchi as found in Singleton, *Dante Alighieri. The Divine Comedy*, trans. and commentary by Charles S. Singleton, 6 vols. (Princeton, 1970–75).

nero" in *bolgia* 5 (Barratry) of the eight circle (21: 37–42). Next comes Pistoia, denounced in 25:10–15 in the voice of Dante-poet because of Vanni Fucci, a Pistoian thief (and blasphemer), in the seventh *bolgia* (Theft) of the eight circle. In the tenth and final *bolgia* (Falsifiers) of the eight Circle, Dante-protagonist denounces the Siense in connection with alchemy (29:121–23).

The final two instances of the program both occur in the ninth circle (Treachery) in the same canto, *Inferno* 33. Here it is a question of the first, second and third of the four sub-divisions of the ninth circle. Here Dante-poet denounces Pisa as a "modern Thebes," worthy of destruction for having murdered innocent children (*Inferno* 33: 79–90). The sixth and final denunciation, of Genoa, resonates with and gathers semantic, theological, and rhetorical power by being the culmination of this program. This increasing power is further augmented by the fact that *Inferno* 33 is the only canto in the program where there are two denunciations, each of a different city, and both in the authoritative voice of Dante-poet.

These semantic overtones created by the structural context of the denunciation of Genoa in *Inferno* 33 are I think relevant to that passage's function in the *Songe*.¹² A third point is the intertextual function in the *Songe* of the fact that the *Inferno*'s denunciation of Genoa is intensely marked for "betrayal." The third sub-division of the ninth Circle, called Tolomea, contains the souls of those who committed treachery to guests—with violence and deceit.

Finally, Philippe's explicit evocation of Dante's *Commedia*, his authoritative *livre*, in Book I, chapter 39 works to link this text—so powerfully characterized by figural typology and crusader ideology—to the single most famous romance vernacular literary embodiment of precisely these key features. The *Divine Comedy*'s extraordinary usage of figural typology in a first-person narrative that claims literal-historical truth is well known. At the same time, the *Comedy* as a whole, and most especially in the *Paradiso*, is militantly in favor of—indeed, in the service of—crusade ideology. The most dramatic instance of this

¹² For the program of the denunciation of Italian cities in the *Inferno* see the commentary on chapter 26, 1–3 in *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*. Vol. I. *Inferno*. Ed. & trans. Robert M. Durling, introduction and notes by Robert Durling and Ronald L. Martinez (New York–Oxford, 1996), 406. This commentary suggests a Dantean subtext, which would also be significant for Philippe's excoriation of Genoa in *Songe* Book I, chap. 39: Christ's denunciation of the wicked cities in Luke 10:13–15.

occurs in the Heaven of Mars, at the center of the final *cantica*. Here Dante's direct ancestor and father figure, the crusader Cacciaguida who dies a martyr in the Second Crusade, is presented as figurally linked to Joshua—the "first crusader"—by a line of crusaders including Judas Maccabaeus, Charlemagne, Roland, Guillaume of Orange, Rainouart, Robert Guiscard, and Godfrey of Bouillon, the conqueror of Jerusalem in the First Crusade (*Paradiso*, 18: 25–48). Again, all of this is relevant to Philippe's text, and to the figure of Peter of Lusignan as exemplary crusader, presented in powerfully figural terms.

To sum up: the entire *Songe* is addressed by Philippe-author to the young King of France, Charles VI, who is presented as the new Hope—the "jeune Moïse"—of Philippe's vision of a world-redeeming crusade project. This project is tripartite, involving first, the peaceful settling of Christendom's "civil war" between England and France; second, the resolution of the Papal Schism; and, third, a pan-European Crusade to (re-)Christianize fully Jerusalem, the Holy Land, the "schismatic" Eastern churches—and all "formerly Christian" territory under Muslim rule.

In this context, Philippe's striking and repeated presentation in Book I of the *Songe* of Peter of Lusignan as exemplary crusading monarch of Cyprus during the decade of the 1360s serves ultimately as both a model and a cautionary tale for Charles VI, the young king of France who—by understanding and imitating this royal crusader Cypriot *exemplum* within the full world historical context of the unfolding 1390s—can fulfill *in bono* the figural type who is the king of Cyprus, Peter of Lusignan; the archetypal first Crusader, who is Joshua; and the ultimate, salvific *exemplum*—who exists in the literal-historical sense, in the allegorical sense, in the moral sense, and in the anagogic sense: Christ Himself.

* * *

In Book II of the *Songe*, there are two key passages in which Cyprus is presented as a model for France, one positive and one negative.

The first occurs in the course of the discussion of the third hierarchy of French society, which includes judges, court officers, lawyers, and officials in the royal administration. The authoritative speaker is Hardiesse, the *chambriere*, the attendant, of Justice. A key part of Hardiesse's discourse involves a sustained attack on advocates, condemned as inimical to the legitimate functioning of the justice system. It is in this context that Hardiesse evokes Cyprus, as a corrective

counter-example to the current French legal system. Cypriot exemplary administration of justice results from following the legal code known as the *Assizes de Jérusalem*: "Et fu la dicte loy et assizes apportee en Chippre par les roy de Hierusalem quant la Terre Sainte fu perdue par les pechiez des Crestiens (et) les roys se retreyrent en Chyppre." This *translatio legis* is further authorized by a geographical *translatio* to Cyprus of the kingdom of Jerusalem. In Cyprus the *Assizes* function so effectively in the administration of justice that disputes are settled there in a matter of days without the need of lawyers, "... sans advocat ou procureur." As a result, there is no need for lawyers in Cyprus: "Ne ou dit royaume n'a aucune personne qui ait nom d'avocat" (chap. 96, 487; 417).

The second passage in Book II in which Cyprus functions as an example for France to follow (under the young Charles VI) is explicitly linked to the extra-textual, historically literal experience of the Old Pilgrim, which serves to authenticate it. Here it is a question of an *exemplum ex negativo*. The speaker is the *chambriere* Droicture, who is in the process of exposing and criticizing the highest category of the second hierarchy, that is, the counselors of great lords. In this context, she recounts an exemplary tale: "un tresgrant peril et dangier qui advint a ung roy catholique [Peter I of Cyprus] ou temps et en la presence du Vieil Pelerin. Cestui vaillant roy passoit la mer entre Chipre et Surie en sa gallee" (chap. 133, 580–81; 518–19). A violent storm begins, and the king refuses to heed the good advice of "un saige marinier, conseilher du patron" that he lower the sails in order to protect his own life: "disant qu'il n'estoit pas bon de mectre un roy en peril de noyer. Laquelle opinion le Vieil Pelerin confortoit a son pouvoir." Because of the king's arrogance, the ship is hit by a squall, which would have sunk it and drowned all on board, had not the "saige marinier" intervened to turn the ship in the direction of the wind. Droicture then uses this historical event witnessed by the Old Pilgrim to gloss the allegorical Ship of State: "Pourtant est il... que quant les patrons des nefz moralisant figurees gouvernent la nef sans le conseil des anciens et loyaux mariniers, on veoit communement que telle nef faisant son voyage se trouve continuelment en fortune" (chap. 133, 581–82; 520).

Thus, the *Songe's* privileged royal target audience of one (the young king of France Charles VI) is meant to learn from the negative example of Peter I, king of Cyprus, which he must correctively reverse. He must listen to the advice of his good counselor Philippe de Mézières, as King Peter did not, in order to fulfill his divine mission as crusader

king. Within the configuration of pedagogic authority established in the *Songe* as a whole, the historical experience of the Vieil Pelerin in his extra-textual past in Cyprus thus powerfully reinforces the legitimacy of his voice as author figure in the diegetic present of the text. All of this will be elaborated and intensified in the next reference to the Vieil Pelerin's historical experience in Cyprus, thereby suggesting that these references can be seen to function together as a program.

The first explicit mention of Cyprus and King Peter I as exemplary for the young king of France in Book III of the *Songe* occurs in Queen Vérité's explanation of the meaning of the eighth square of the fourth quarter of the allegorical chessboard, in chapter 228 (chap. 228, 218–20; 683–86). At issue is the absolute political necessity of protecting the physical person of the king by the diligent deployment of bodyguards. Possible dangers to Charles VI are presented as greatly increased by the present political divisiveness that characterizes the kingdom of France. There has been a falling away from a French past of virtue and plenitude, and the distance between this idealized past and the current time of troubles is measured by the lifetime of the Old Pilgrim, implying, I suggest, the key importance of his status in the *Songe* as first-person witness to historical events: "...pour les pechiez du royaume, depuis le temps du commainement du Vieil Pelerin, la gracieuse nef francoise en partie est devenue Lombardie. Il y a des Guelfs et des Guibelins (chap. 228, 218; 684). It is interesting to speculate, in light of Philippe's knowledge of Dante's *Commedia* as evidenced in *Songe* Book I chapter 39, that this reference to Guelfs and Ghibellines to indicate destructive civil war in late fourteenth-century France might also have a Dantean resonance in, especially, *Purgatory* 6 and *Paradiso* 6, where the internecine conflict of these two parties is presented as a civil war responsible for the weakness of thirteenth-century Italy.

To support her argument that Charles VI must be properly defended against any threat to his physical person, Vérité cites three examples, two positive, and one negative. First, "ton grant pere predecesseur et parrain, saint Charlemaine," king of France and Roman emperor, who always had himself protected at night by three shifts of armed guards. Second, "le saige Salemon," king of Israel, who also posted armed guards around his bed at night. The third exemplary figure refused to be prudent in this way, despite the repeated warnings of his counselor: "Et te souveigne, Beau Filz, que derainement et naguesres le tres vailant roy de Chippre, Pierre de Lisignen, par deffaulte de garde, horriblement fu murtriz en son lit dormant. Car il fu negligent de tenir

la garde ordonnee de son corps, telle que le Vieil Pelerin lui avoit acoustume et plusieurs foiz conseillie" (chap. 228, 220; 685).

Thus, the king of Cyprus serves as an *exemplum ex negativo* for the young king of France, in a configuration involving Charlemagne and Solomon that evokes Biblical typology. Charles VI—the "young Moses" who leads the French, the new Israelites, out of bondage—is simultaneously presented as a new Solomon, the Biblical model of kingship, and a new Charlemagne, the model of a Christian crusading king of France. At the same time, he can fulfill the model figure of a fourteenth-century crusading king, Catholic and French-speaking, by correctively reversing the personal imprudence of Peter I of Cyprus. The physical presence of Philippe, in the literal historical past, at the court of Cyprus as royal counselor authorizes the status of Peter I as *exemplum*, while the fact that that same historical person is the author of the *Songe*, provides a privileged link between the former king of Cyprus and the present king of France, whom Philippe currently serves as a royal counselor, including in the writing of the present book.

The next explicit presentation of an episode in Cypriot history that is exemplary for the young Charles VI occurs as Vérité is in the process of interpreting the meaning of the eleventh square of the first quarter of the allegorical chessboard in Book III (chap. 231, 227–28; 693–94). In order to illustrate the necessity of moderation in royal expenditures, given the untenable financial circumstances of France as Charles VI begins his active reign, Vérité explicitly identifies the Old Pilgrim as her source: "Et pour ce que...les exemples meuvent plus que les paroles, a cestui propoz je recorderay un exemple que le Vieil Pelerin m'a conte." The story involves King Henry IV of Cyprus, who is identified by his family link with Peter I, whose own status as an exemplary crusader is stressed: "Il ot un roy en Chippre appelle Henry de Lizignen, grant oncle de tresvaillant roy Pierre, qui par bataille print Sathalie et Alixandre et plusieurs autres citez et chasteaulx sus les ennemis de la foy crestienne." Henry IV was deposed and imprisoned in 1306 by his brother, Amaury de Lusignan, lord of Tyre. Amaury's subsequent assassination as a tyrant in 1310 led to the reestablishment of Henry IV as king of Cyprus, upon which he discovered that the four years of the tyrant's rule had left the kingdom's finances in ruins. He immediately established a rigorous program of fiscal austerity, which he maintained for a period of two to three years, after which the kingdom's finances have been put back in balance. In this context, Henry IV of Cyprus is presented as exemplary for the young Charles VI

of France. The chapter closes with the evocation of a similar program of budget deficit management undertaken by “ton grant pere, le benoist saint Louis, quant il revint de la prison du souldan.” Again, French and Cypriot history are linked together in terms of exemplarity, guaranteed by the direct experience of the Old Pilgrim.

At this point it is worth making an important general statement with regard to the presentation of Cyprus in Book I of the *Songe*, versus Books II and III. If at the level of plot in Book I, Verité does not visit Cyprus, which is thereby, as it were, excluded from “contemporary” Christendom, in Books II and III, on the other hand, at the level of discourse by authoritative allegorical characters, Cyprus is treated as a privileged member of world-historical Christendom, especially as a source of *exempla*: Henry IV of Cyprus and Saint Louis of France are put in parallel as examples for the young Charles VI. And, more generally, Cyprus is programmatically linked to France in the overall structure of militant Christian history, with crusade as its culminating activity.¹³ All of these interrelated programs are further developed in Chapter 237 of Book III, in which Vérité explains the meaning of the second square of the second quarter of the chessboard (*ibid.*, 251–61; 718–28). At issue is the fundamental importance of royal piety, especially in its most public form, respect for the divine office. The key royal Cypriot example is Hugh IV, “pere du tresvaillant le roy Pierre,” (*ibid.*, 253; 720), who, whenever he heard a single disruptive word spoken by a member of the public during the divine office celebrated in his royal chapel, “ferait un grant cop en son oratoire devers la chappelle, et tantost silence venoit en place.” This *exemplum* is explicitly authorized by Verité through her reference to the direct witness account of “le Vieil Pelerin,” who “m’a raconte et de veue et d’ouye.” In addition, it is introduced by (and thus implicitly linked to) those of Charlemagne and Saint Louis: “Qu’est devenue la devocion, reverence et silence que le benoist Charlemaine... et le benoist saint Loys avoient et tenoient en personne en l’office divin et faisoient tenir par la vaillant chevalerie du royaume de Gaule?” At the same time, the crusade motif is being strengthened: here two world historical French crusading kings are linked in terms of piety and respect for the divine office with the father of the Peter I, the exemplary crusading king of

¹³ Cf. Gaullier-Bougassas, “Images littéraires de Chypre,” *passim*.

Cyprus. The thrust of this chapter is to present Charles VI as meant to fulfill these past, figural models, in contemporary (that is, post-1389) history, presented from a providential perspective. From the point of view of my current analysis, Cyprus, and especially King Peter I, play a key part in this unfolding of universal Christian world history.

Two Biblical models for the young French king are also significant in this context. First, the chapter opens with the figure of King David ("le saint roi"), presented as both continuing and expanding the divine office initiated by Moses: "car oultre l'office que Moyse avoit ordonne, [David] accreut et amplifia de nouvel l'office divin, grandement et tresdevotement ordonne" (chap. 237, 251–52; 718–19). This includes David's direct and passionately enthusiastic personal participation and singing, "jouant de la harpe, en dictant et chantant les psaulmes du psaultier," before the ark of the covenant. The culmination of this Biblical *exemplum* is, of course, David dancing in front of the ark, wild with joy, ignoring conventional standards of modesty to the point of humiliating himself in order to glorify God, and responding to the reproach of his wife and queen, the proud Michal, daughter of Saul (2 Samuel 6:14–23).¹⁴ This introductory Old Testament model of King David's "extreme" participatory devotion to the divine office is powerfully complemented by the New Testament "royal *exemplum*" of Christ cleansing the Temple: "'Prens doncques cuer en toy, Beau Filz, jeune Moyse couronne,' dist la royne Verite, 'et fais garder les festes et avec Jesuscrist ou temple en personne prens un fouet et de ta chapelle royale enchasse les marchans, les changeurs et les vendeurs de coulons, par lesquelx est entendue la symonie, laquelle de ta chapelle et de ta court royale Dieu veuille qu'elle soit bannie'" (ibid., 254; 721).¹⁵ *Songe* Book III, chap. 237's program of Biblical and Franco-Cypriot historical models for Charles VI concludes with a striking emphasis on crusade, and thus with the figural presentation of the young French king as world historical crusader. Charlemagne is evoked for the second time in the chapter (ibid., 255; 723), here, as a divinely sanctioned crusader on whom God bestows a miracle to enable him

¹⁴ It is interesting to note that the story of David dancing before the ark figures at a key structural moment in the *Divine Comedy*, on the first terrace of Purgatory, where the sin of pride is purged, *Purgatorio* 10: 64–69.

¹⁵ It is important to remember that Christ's cleansing of the temple was taken by medieval exegetes as the final earthly manifestation of His divine justice, and could thus be linked to crusade as holy war.

to complete the conquest of Saragossa in a single day: "Le tresvaillant et trespreu Charlemaine en cestui point ne doit pas ester oublie, pour la foy et devocion duquel en Espaingne, selon ses croniques, Dieu fist arrester le soleil ou ciel tant et si longuement qu'il ot desconfit les ennemis de la foy." It is significant that this miracle figurally recalls that accomplished by God for Joshua to enable the conquest of the town of Gibeon (often conflated with Jericho in the Middle Ages) in a single day (Joshua 10:12–13), especially as this chapter in the *Songe* will conclude with a direct evocation of Joshua as a model for the Charles VI, as we shall see. At the same time, within the context of this chapter, the final component of Charlemagne's figural exemplarity is the extreme humility involved in his walking through the winter mud of Paris to attend midnight Mass anonymously at Notre Dame, despite his being "roy de France et empereur de Romme" (ibid., 255–56; 723). This humble piety links him to King David's exemplary—and humble—devotion to the divine office cited at the beginning of the chapter (ibid., 252; 718–19).

The exemplary figure of royal piety presented by Vérité after Charlemagne, and introduced by an additional reference to the "benoist saint Loys", is none other than Charles V of France: "ton pere Charles, humble et devost, qui chacun an par grant devocion lisoit par maniere d'oroison, la Bible toute entiere" (ibid., 256; 723). The implicit link suggested between Charles V and his two superlative predecessors *cum* French royal exemplars both of piety and crusade leadership (that is, Charlemagne and St. Louis) recalls the introduction of King Hugh IV of Cyprus earlier in the chapter (ibid., 253; 720). Furthermore, I would like to suggest, a significant parallel is implied between the father, Hugh IV, of the past crusader king of Cyprus, Peter I, and the father, Charles V, of the future crusader king of France, Charles VI. As we shall see, this parallel functions in part to weave together the Cypriot and the French components of Philippe de Mézières's notion of sacred Christian history in the *Songe*, especially with regard to holy war, to crusade. It is in this context that the piety of Charles V enables him—through the power of profoundly sincere and discreet prayer—to obtain God's help in his battles with his enemies. Charles VI is exhorted to follow his father's example: "mander ton confesseur et ton aumosnier par tout pour empetrer a Dieu suffrage et aide, et faire aucunes graces et aumosnes piteuses comme faisoit devotement ton bon pere, qui par ceste maniere ot de Dieu mainte belle victoire sus ses ennemis, lui seant en sa chaere. Et maintesfois, pour empetrer les suffrages susdiz, il fist du Vieil Pelerin son especial messagier" (ibid.,

258; 725). As the Old Pilgrim's personal, historical past experience authorizes, within the context of the *Songe* considered as a whole the exemplary Christian status of the Cypriot royal house by linking it with that of the house of France, so here it also links the holy dimension of Charles V to his son Charles VI, thus directly empowering the latter, especially with regard to his future mission: "Et pour un moyen gracieux et continuel de ta devocion, Beau Filz,' dist la royne, 'il te souveigne en tous tes faiz de la briefve oroison que te presenta humblement et secretement le Vieil Pelerin ton orateur indigne, c'est assavoir, *O bone Jesu, etc.*" (ibid., 260; 727).

This extremely rich chapter presents one additional French king as exemplifying the combination of love of the divine office, profound personal piety, and, consequently, miraculous aid by God in time of war. This is Robert II the Pious, son of Hugh Capet and second reigning member of the Capetian line: "Cestui Robert fu tresvaillant en armes et tres devost a Dieu" (ibid., 260; 728). While laying siege to a particularly well defended castle held by his enemies, King Robert leaves his troops in order to attend the service being held in the chapel of a nearby monastery. As is his habit, King Robert actively participates in the service, singing enthusiastically, and thus recalling, I suggest, the singing of King David before the ark, with which the chapter had begun. In this concluding example, King Robert's joyous and unselfconscious participation in the service (along with the monks) leads directly to a miraculous divine intervention on the field of battle: "le roy, a haulte voix, commainca en personne a chanter et a commaincier *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi*. Et lors pour la grant devocion dudit roy de France, Dieu fit tel miracle que a la fin de *Agnus Dei* et que le roy et les moisnes chantoient *Dona nobis pacem*, en un moment a cellui mot tous les murs du chastel cheurent et tresbucherent a terre, et les gens d'armes du roy sans bataille entrerent ou chastel" (ibid., 260; 728).¹⁶ While the chapter's earlier example of miraculous divine intervention on the battlefield to help the crusading Charlemagne implicitly recalled Joshua's triumph at Jericho, here this comparison is made explicitly: "Et ainsi ot le roy [Robert] la victoire de ses ennemis et du chastel assegie pour sa grant devocion, comme

¹⁶ It is worth noting here the author's use of theologically informed stylistic technique: the word "peace" from the liturgy cues the miraculous narrative act of military victory in what I take to be Christian holy war.

jadis Dieu fist a la priere et devocion du tresvaillant Josue, chevetine du peuple d'Israel, de la cite de Jherico" (ibid., 260). In terms of figural typology, a lineage of divinely chosen crusaders has been established: Joshua, Charlemagne, Robert II of France, St. Louis, Peter I of Cyprus, the young Charles VI of France. This lineage functions within the hermeneutic structure of the *Songe* to authorize the future mission of Charles VI as world historical crusader, fulfilling God's plan. In terms of the polemical aim of the *Songe* in the extra-textual, politico-historical world this authorization is meant to persuade the work's uniquely privileged target audience, that is, Charles VI himself, to accept this divinely sanctioned future mission. From the perspective of the present investigation, it is the privileged status of Cyprus in this program that is key: the Cypriot royal house of Lusignan, and in particular, the world historical crusader example of King Peter I. If Charles VI of France is consistently presented as the "new Moses," and the French as the "new Israelites," the new chosen people, the same figural construct is applied to Peter I of Cyprus and to the Cypriots. And the "prophetic imperative" taught by the *Songe*'s author figure requires that the new Moses become the new Joshua, the new crusader, the new conquer of the Promised Land.¹⁷

In the final two explicit references to Cyprus in Book III of the *Songe*,¹⁸ the emphasis is on King Peter I as crusading exemplar for the young French king Charles VI, and thus on the key relation between Cyprus and France in the context of Philippe's concept of universal Christian salvation history.

In *Songe*, Book III, chapter 281, Vérité expounds upon the meaning of the thirteenth square of the fourth quarter of the "moral eschequier."

¹⁷ In this context, it is, I think, suggestive to note that Dante's *Commedia* programmatically presents Joshua as the foundational crusader in figural terms, most explicitly in *Paradiso* 9: 124–25 and in *Paradiso* 18: 37–38. In the first passage, Rahab the Harlot, a Canaanite from Jericho, is harrowed from hell by Christ (9:118–20) because she helped Joshua conquer Jericho: "perch' ella favorò la prima gloria / di Iosüè in su la Terra Santa." In the second passage, Cacciaguida, Dante's biological father figure, who met his death fighting in the Second Crusade, points out to the first-person protagonist the world historical lineage of crusaders, of conquerors of the Promised Land, beginning with, initiated by, Joshua (18:37–38).

¹⁸ I do not here treat here the single mention of Cyprus in *Songe* Book III, 246, where usury is the primary focus. Cyprus is praised as sharing the practice found "oultre mer par tout entre Crestiens et Sarrezins" (ibid., 285) with regard to its treatment of Jews, which is praised in contradistinction to French practice in this context (ibid., 285; 754–55).

At issue is the production and preservation of national wealth in a Christian monarchy, which are ascribed almost exclusively to commerce and trade, that is to the productive activity of merchants. The key illustrative comparison that opens the chapter involves and figurally links Cyprus and France: the former is presented as a model for the latter, and the strong implicit import of this exemplarity involves the capacity to launch crusades. Economic prosperity is clearly presented as making crusade possible; and thus, as it were, receives a supplementary spiritual valorization, in addition to its obvious political and humanitarian imperatives.

The treatment of the two countries involves in each case a contrastive comparison between a prosperous past and an impoverished present. With Cyprus, the strikingly positive past is given authoritative historical substance by reference to the Old Pilgrim as first-person witness and participant. And the ultimate proof and value of former Cypriot prosperity is that it enabled King Peter I to undertake a set of exemplary crusades: the "royaume de Chypre, qui ou temps du Vieil Pelerin pour l'abondance de la marchandie estoit si riche en personnes et (en) biens que le tresvaillant roy Perre de Lysignen, de l'abondance de richesse de son royaume, par sa vaillance et prouesse, a ses despens de son petit royaume, print par bataille Alixandre en Egypte, Sathalie en Turquie, Layas en Armenie, Tourtoige et Triple en Surie, grosses citez anciennes et solennelles, sus les mescreans de la foy, comme il fu dit autresfois" (chap. 281, 419; 896). The exemplary status of King Peter as crusader is emphasized by the wide geographic span in the list of what are presented as his victorious crusades: Egypt, Turkey, Armenia, and Syria. Despite the historical reality of the small and very limited triumphs of the king, Philippe's text functions to present them, collectively, as a kind of universal crusade in miniature. Thus, we have a kind of embryonic sketch of what would be fully realized by Charles VI if he accepts the divine crusading mission that Philippe's use of figural typology works to impose on him.

What follows is an evocation (recalling in abbreviated form the lamentations of the two allegorical Cypriot ladies who appear to Vérité during her visits to Venice and Genoa in Book I of the *Songe*) of the present misery of the island kingdom: "Mais a present, pour ce que au dit royaume de Chypre, par l'oppression tyrannique et avarice inhumaine de ceulz qui ou champ blanc portent la vermeille croix—ce sont les Genevoys—oudit royaume la marchandie est perie e les habitans du royaume sont devenus sauvaiges et semblent mieulx mors

que en vie" (ibid., 419; 896–97). Recalling the earlier and more detailed presentation of current Cypriot economic disaster in Book I, one can, I think, see this disaster as presented in *Songe*, Book III, chapter 281 as divine punishment for the collective Cypriot sin of the murder of King Peter. This divine causation will become explicit in the following treatment of the prosperous French past in contrast to its unhappy present. In both the Cypriot and the French cases the immediate cause of economic disaster is presented as the destruction of a merchant based trade economy.

The past prosperity of France, the result of mercantile activity, is introduced as Vérité, addressing the young Charles VI, evokes yet again the Old Pilgrim as first-person witness: "Beau Filz...es temps passez et d'orez, et ou temps du Vieil Pelerin, quant marchandie avoit son plain cours ou royaume de Gaule, le roy et les eglises, les nobles et le people, estoient riches et de tous biens rempliz comme l'œuf" (ibid., 419–20; 897). The current French economic condition of widespread poverty is attributed to divine punishment for French sins, effected by means of the French destruction of their former trade- and merchant-based economy: "Mais depuis que mon Pere, pour les pechiez de Franche, usa de sa verge corrective, et que par les Francois les marchans estranges et privez furent mal traytez et les boutiques vides, la pauvreté par tout entra en seigneurie ou royaume de France. Pour laquelle pauvreté maintes choses ont esté faictes qui sentoient tyrannie" (ibid., 420; 897).

It is significant that the historico-economic parallel between the Kingdom of Cyprus and that of France, used to demonstrate that merchants and trade are essential to prosperity, is explicitly authorized by the first-person, "extra-textual" experience of the Old Pilgrim, here indicating the first-person author figure, embedded in extra-textual history. This strategy of authorization gives a powerful supplementary dimension to the authorial speaking subject, even as he "advises" his privileged royal addressee. It is as if fourteenth-century Cypriot and French history were incarnated in Philippe as author, delineated by his very lifespan, "unified" in him. Thus the key figural link between Cyprus and France within the overall polemical strategy of the *Songe* is subtly reinforced. And the exemplarity of Peter I, qua triumphant crusader king, for Charles VI receives additional emphasis. In effect, economic prosperity is here presented not only as an end in itself, in material terms, but also as a means to the end of crusade, in spiritual terms, i.e., in terms of Christian salvation history.

It comes as no surprise that the last explicit mention of the Cypriot King Peter I in the *Songe* functions to advance the work's global agenda of sublime crusade propaganda, in combination with that of political and economic reform.¹⁹ In Chapter 284 of Book III, Vérité explicates the meaning of the last square of the allegorical chessboard, number fifteen of the fourth quarter: preparation for the universal Christian crusade to be led by Charles VI. The project is conceived in terms that are both visionary and highly practical. Philippe's earlier work, the *New Order of the Chivalry of the Passion of Jesus Christ*,²⁰ is integrated into the diegesis of the *Songe* as an already available written set of instructions for how to effect the sacred project (*ceste sainte besoigne*): "comme il est contenu clerement et advenu en *l'espire secrete que le Vieil Pelerin en s'estude devotement presenta a ta royalle mageste*" (chap. 284, 431; 908; emphasis mine). Peace with England must be established as a necessary precondition to successful crusade. Within France, political and economic reforms must put the entire land on a war footing. The various Christian kingdoms visited in Part I of the *Songe* are here reconfigured as a grand strategic alliance of three armies to launch the universal Christian holy war over the entire Mediterranean and European world. The geographically and spiritually central army will be led by France and England fighting together, along with allies from Scotland, Ireland, Hainault, the rest of the Low Countries, Savoy, Bar, Lombardy, Tuscany, Apulia and the rest of Italy. The goal of this central holy army is specified as "en Egypte et en Surie et une partie en Armenie et en Turquie" (ibid., 435; 913). It is interesting, in the context of the present study, to note that these recall the four-part geographical summary of the "successful crusades" of Peter I listed in *Songe* Book III, chapter 281. Implicitly, and in figural terms, the future crusade of Charles VI will fulfill *in bono* the past, ultimately unsuccessful, model of Peter I, which is thus made to function in tandem with the other canonical crusader models in Philippe's strategic use of typology, extending from Joshua to Charlemagne and Saint Louis.

¹⁹ As Blanchard insightfully notes in the introduction to his translation: "les deux projects [of the *Songe* as a whole], réforme politique et croisade, sont parfaitement intégrés, comme le figure la croix dans l'échiquier," see Blanchard, *Songe du Vieux Pelerin*, 49.

²⁰ For this work, see Andrea Tarnowski, "Material Examples: Philippe de Mézières' *Order of the Passion*," *Yale French Studies* 110 (Fall 2006), 163–75.

In the section immediately following, the practical aspects of the passage by sea to the Holy Land are considered, opening with the statement that only Venice and Genoa are capable of transporting the holy army. There follows a list of recommendations for the particular types of ships that should be used for the transport of the central army of Charles VI and “ton frère d’Angleterre.” One of these types is singled out for special comment: the *tafforesse*. After describing its many strategic advantages, Vérité concludes her highly positive recommendation by presenting as the proof of the *tafforesse*’s excellence and efficacy its performance during the conquest of Alexandria: “Et se defendent aussi bien de la fortune comme font les autres nefes, sicomme ou temps du Vieil Pelerin il fu exprouve a la prinse d’Alixandre, car le vaillant roy de Chippre, Pierre de Lizignien, entre les vaisseaulx de sa gracieuse petite armee, avoit desdictes tafforesses environ xvi, qui furent tresbonnes preuves.”(ibid., 436; 914).

Thus, the briefly “successful” past crusade of King Peter of Cyprus is used to teach practical lessons for the future “universal” crusade of King Charles VI of France. At the same time, it is implied that Peter’s Alexandria crusade prefigures Charles’s Jerusalem crusade. The *Songe*, again, writes the Cypriot King’s crusade into universal Christian history as a heroic success in and of itself, but incomplete—undermined by the inadequacy of his own troops and by the amoral aggressiveness of the Genoese at Alexandria. The complete fulfillment of the promise of the Cypriot King’s crusade can be fully realized in the unfolding of Philippe’s vision of Christian salvation history only by the new French monarch.

LITERATURE AND CHIVALRIC EDUCATION IN
PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES' *LE SONGE DU VIEIL PELERIN*

Stefan Vander Elst

In *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, written in the late 1380s to inform Charles VI (1380–1422) on the state of the world, to instruct him in government and to exhort him to crusade, Philippe de Mézières pointed out to the young monarch the depths to which French chivalry has fallen in his day.¹ The knighthood of France had once been the very flower of the world's chivalry; however, by the time of Philippe's writing it had truly lost its way:

Que se dira de cestui chevalerie...aujourd'uy mal enseignie? Il se puet dire que de toute la doctrine et vrayz enseignemens de l'art de vraye chevalerie escript par les Assyriens, par les vaillans Juifz, et par les Rommain, par les Grecs, et par tous les Crestiens, ceste chevalerie francoise, de cent regles necessaires a la guerre et au bezant de l'ame, n'en tient pas le dixain... Et pource que depuis viii ou x ans, de foulons et de tysserans sans cop ferir ilz ont eu une victoire par la sentence de Dieu et vengeance de pechie, ilz ont prins vaine gloire. Et puet estre que (a) la vaillant(e) chevalerie qui estoit en la compaignie du roy Artus, de Godefroy de Buillon, et du tresvaillant Charlemagne, ilz se oseroient bien comparer.

[What can be said of this knighthood...now so badly educated? It can be said that of all the doctrine and true teachings of the art of true chivalry written by the Assyrians, by the brave Jews, and by the Romans, Greeks, and by all the Christians, of the hundred rules necessary for war and for the bezant of the soul, that French knighthood upholds only a tenth... And because eight or ten years ago, without striking a blow, they won a victory over some commoners and weavers through the intervention of God and in revenge of sin, they have taken to vainglory. And it may well be that they dare to compare themselves to the brave knighthood that accompanied king Arthur, Godfrey of Bouillon, and the most valiant Charlemagne].²

¹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, ed. G. W. Coopland, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1969).

² Mézières, *Le Songe*, 1: 525, chap. 109. The translation here as well as all following translations from the *Songe* are my own.

The chivalry of France, Philippe claimed, has taken too much comfort in its easy victory over the forces of the Flemish communes at the Battle of Roosebeke (1382), and has lost all resemblance to what knighthood was meant to be. The fighting classes have replaced the teachings of the heroes of biblical, classical, and early Christian times with pretence and fancy, and the examples set by Arthur, Godfrey, and Charlemagne are no longer followed. The effect had been disastrous:

O quelz douleurs et habondance de laermes devroyent avoir les Francois d'oyr lire a leur confusion ung tel exemple de la chevalerie de France, qui de tous Crestiens et payens soulout etre redoubtee, aimee et prisee, mais aujourduy se sont laissiez decheoir en la boe d'ordure, d'orgueil, d'avarice, et de diffamee luxure...

[O what pains and abundance of tears should the French have when they hear read, to their detriment, such an example of the knighthood of France, which used to be feared, loved, and praised by all Christians and pagans alike, but which today has allowed itself to fall into the mud of filth, pride, avarice, and shameful lust...].³

It was important for Philippe to educate the young Charles VI in the true ways of knighthood. Himself a knight, Philippe appears to have cared deeply about the "sainte chevalerie."⁴ To the erstwhile Chancellor of Cyprus, it was not only a code of decorous social behavior, but also the very apex of Western Christian warfare and, as instanced by his *Order of the Passion*, an important force in the advancement of the crusade enterprise.⁵ To show the king the path towards true chivalry

³ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 531, chap. 112. Philippe's "luxure" most likely refers to the sin of *luxuria*.

⁴ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 531, chap. 112.

⁵ Philippe appears to have closely associated chivalry with the practice of warfare as a whole:

Troys estaz de personnes se treuvent en la dicte chevalerie francoise, exercans le fait d'armes...c'est assavoir le commun des nobles qui ne sieuvent pas la se n'est quant le roy va en l'ost; le second ordre des personnes si est des chevaliers et escuiers qui continuellement sieuvent la guerre contre les adversaries; mais le tiers ordre si est des personnes non nobles, de petit estat et aucunesfoiz laboureurs ou de mestiers, qui, les ungs par hardiesse, les autres par pillage, se sont faiz gens d'armes et sont sans nombre, et les aucuns de grant puissance et de horrible tyrannie, sicomme Teste Noyre et plusieurs de sa route.

[There are three ranks of people that practice arms in this French knighthood...these are, all the noblemen who do not participate unless the king joins the army; the second kind of people is that of knights and squires who continuously participate in the war against the adversaries; but the third kind is that of people who are not noblemen, men of low rank and sometimes even labourers

would therefore not just help the personal development of the young monarch, but would hopefully also result in a return to better chivalric values and better practices of war in the whole of France, as well as benefit the crusade.

His answer to the problematic state of French knighthood was not revolutionary: a knight or aspirant knight should merely “*ung peu estudier les loys de vraye chevalerie*” [study the laws of true chivalry a little].⁶ As did so many of his chivalric contemporaries, Philippe sought these laws with past masters.⁷ To find the path to good knighthood, one had to look for guidance in the *res gestae* of the ancestors who had created chivalry and made it flourish in ages past. Philippe therefore suggested some examples and written sources for the young Charles VI to follow. It is the choice of these, and the importance of this selection in Philippe’s time, which forms the subject of this paper. As we will see, Philippe does not approve of all sources describing deeds of chivalric prowess, but employs a form of moral and what we may even term literary criticism to differentiate what should be followed and what should be avoided. This criticism, then, appears to tie in with a wider discussion on the nature and future of chivalry in the later Middle Ages.

When looking for examples of good chivalric behavior Philippe drew on sources dating back to the very beginning of the Judeo-Christian tradition. As seen above, he traced the earliest doctrines of “*l’art de vraye chevalerie*” to “*les Assyriens*” and “*les vaillans Juifz*.” In doing so, he followed long-established tradition. “The Old Testament leaders had been constantly held up as an example to Christian warriors for a long time—since before the word chivalry was coined, indeed.”⁸ The Bible told of the deeds of “*le tresvaillant chevalier Judas Machabeus*,” [the very brave knight Judas Maccabeus] of “noble Maccabeus” who

or tradesmen, some of whom are very powerful and horribly tyrannical, such as [Geoffrey] the Black Head and others of his company].

The fact that he includes both aristocratic fighters and armed commoners (whom he roundly despises) within the chivalry of France suggests that chivalry meant more to him than the particular kind of war, with its attendant demands of martial and social behaviour, practiced by the highest ranks of society. Indeed, it may have come to denote *all* warfare for him; what therefore benefited chivalry would have benefited the practice of war as a whole. See Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 530, chap. 112.

⁶ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 531, chap. 112.

⁷ Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven, 1984), 102–24.

⁸ Keen, *Chivalry*, 119.

showed that “les victoires viennent du ciel” [victories come down from heaven].⁹ It showed the correct method of taking a city, and that a commander should give the honor of accepting its surrender to the monarch:

...sicomme fait en tel cas le tresvaillant chevalier Joab, prince de la chevalerie du tressaint et tres preu David, de la cite de Rabac, a la prinse de laquelle David, roy de Hierusalem et d’Israel, a tout son ost y vint et en personne print la cite et en s’ot bon gre a son chevetaine, comme it appert en la Bible au second livre des Roys.

[...as, in such a case, the most valiant knight Joab, the leader of the knights of the very holy and very brave David, did with the city of Rabbah, to the taking of which David, king of Jerusalem and of Israel, came with his whole army, and personally took the city, and had much good will towards his commander, as is shown in the Bible in the second book of Kings].¹⁰

As the examples of “la vaillance des dessusdiz... David et Josue, Judas Machabeus” [the bravery of the above mentioned... David and Joshua, [and] Judas Maccabeus] highlighted the close association of martial success with divine approval, they offered lessons the monarch of a country whose knighthood had so deeply fallen into sin would be wise to follow.¹¹

Beyond the pages of sacred history, Charles VI could find chivalric excellence in the writings of the Greeks and Romans. He should follow the example of Scipio Africanus, “car il avoit eu les grans estaz et conquis les royaumes, non pas pour lui mais pour la seigneurie des Rommains” [because he occupied high rank and conquered kingdoms

⁹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 279, chap. 244 and 2: 382, chap. 272. On the use of the Maccabees as chivalric examples, see also Keen, *Chivalry*, 119–21; Mary Fischer, “Biblical Heroes and the Use of Literature: The Teutonic Order in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries,” *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), 261–75; and Mary Fischer, “Di Himels Rôle:” *The Idea of Christian Chivalry in the Chronicles of the Teutonic Order* (Göppingen, 1991), 95–123. Philippe follows a rich tradition in using the Maccabees as a chivalric example. However, the fact that he refers to Judas Maccabeus only very sparingly—on 1: 259, chap. 23; 2: 241, chap. 234; 2: 279, chap. 244; 2: 380, chap. 271; 2: 382–83, chap. 272—and prefers to include him in a list of other examples might suggest that Philippe thought the image of the resolutely religious warrior alone would not resonate with Charles VI.

¹⁰ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 519–20, chap. 105; Phillippe refers to 2 Samuel 12:25–31.

¹¹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 240–41, chap. 234. Also, see note 3.

not for himself but for Roman rule], and that of Cato, who had subjected the East to Roman dominion.¹² Furthermore, Vegetius' *De Re Militari* provided a fine resource on methods of war:¹³

Et qui voudra savoir plus a menu et en espical de l'office des chevetaines de la guerre et de ses apparances si lise le gracieux livre de Vegesius intit(u)le De la Chose Chevalereuse, et la trouvera les belles reigles particulieres aux chevetaines et a toute vaillante chevalerie pour obtenir vaillamment les victoyres desirees.

[And let he who wants to know more in detail, and more especially about the work of commanders in war and what pertains to that, read Vegetius' elegant book entitled *About Matters of Chivalry*, and he will find there the beautiful rules specific to commanders, as well as to all brave knighthood, to bravely obtain the desired victories].¹⁴

A third and final group of examples, then, could be found in the more recent past. If the books of the Bible had spoken of heroes such as Joshua and Judas Maccabeus, and the Roman sources told one of the deeds of Scipio Africanus and the military acumen of Vegetius, the Christian West itself had produced knights such as Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon. Their examples must be as the whetstone to the knife:

Après, Beau Filz, Moyse, jeune roy couronne, qui as ou doys avoir tres grande voulente d'amander la villenye qui est faicte a mon Pere en Hierusalem et en la Terre Saincte, tu doys lire souvent la belle et vraye hystoire du tresvaillant duc Godefroy de Buillon et de sa noble compaignie et sainte chevalerie. Et tout ainsi que frotant le couteau a la queuz il s'aguise et devient plus trenchant, tout ainsi moralisant en lisant la sainte chevalerie sustouchee, ton premier varlet de ta chambre, Ardant Desir, soit la queuz et ton cuer soit le cutel; si deviendra aguise et bien trenchant, voire pour detrenchier la guerre, et de laisser la guerre des Crestiens, et emprendre saintement et vaillamment la noble bataille de Dieu, par laquelle benediction a ton senestre couste, Beau Filz, tu ceindras l'espee, par laquelle des ennemis de la foy la Sainte Terre sera delivre.

¹² Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 521–24, chap. 107–108. Philippe most likely drew on Livy, whom he refers to repeatedly, for his information on Scipio and Cato. See e.g. Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 381, chap. 271.

¹³ Flavius Vegetius Renatus, *The Military Institutions of the Romans*, trans. John Clark, ed. Thomas R. Phillips (Harrisburg, 1944).

¹⁴ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 520, chap. 105.

[Afterwards, Beautiful Son, Moses, young crowned king, who has or should have great desire to correct the wrong done to my Father in Jerusalem in the Holy Land, you have to read often the beautiful and true history of the brave duke Godfrey of Bouillon and of his noble company and his holy knighthood. And just as scraping a knife by the handle makes it sharper and more cutting, then figuratively by reading (about) the above mentioned holy chivalry, let your first chamber attendant, Ardent Desire, be the handle and your heart be the knife; that way it will become sharpened and well-cutting, that is to cut off war and leave behind the war of the Christians, and to take on, sacredly and bravely, the noble battle of God, through whose blessing, Beautiful Son, you will attach to your left side the sword by which the Holy Land will be delivered from the enemies of the faith].¹⁵

The works Philippe refers to in the passage above, “the beautiful and true history of the brave Duke Godfrey of Bouillon,” have been the subject of some discussion. Laura Hibbard Loomis refers to the catalogue, dated 1373, of the royal library of the Louvre, which lists thirteen manuscripts in prose dealing with Godfrey de Bouillon, and suggests that he probably referred to early chronicles of the crusade.¹⁶ Joan Williamson, however, points to the 1380 catalogue, which lists a verse book “du Chevalier au cisme, et de Godeffroy de Builon, de la terre d’outre mer.” This, she assumes, refers to the fourteenth-century *Chevalier au Cygne et Godefroi de Bouillon*, a text belonging to the so-called Second Crusade Cycle. She therefore argues that Philippe de Mézières’ recommendation, made in 1389, probably refers the young king to a royal library containing both chronicles in prose and epics in verse.¹⁷ If Williamson is correct, it is interesting that Philippe does not differentiate much between the two. Indeed, he directs Charles VI to the Bible, to histories, chronicles and more literary works such as epic poems as useful sources of good knighthood without apparently making any distinction between them as sources of information. His untroubled acceptance of some literary texts as valid repositories of historical knowledge is illustrated when he mentions the example of Charlemagne:

¹⁵ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 222–23, chap. 229.

¹⁶ Laura Hibbard Loomis, “Secular Dramatics in the Royal Palace, 1378, 1389, and Chaucer’s ‘Tregetoures,’” *Speculum* 33 (1958), 247.

¹⁷ Joan B. Williamson, “Philippe de Mézières et l’influence du Cycle de la Croisade au 14^e Siècle,” *Les Épopées de la Croisade. Premier Colloque International* (Trèves, 6–11 août 1984), eds. Karl-Heinz Bender and Hermann Kleber (Stuttgart, 1987), 166–67.

Le tresvaillant et trespreu Charlemaine en cestui point ne doit pas estre oublie, pour la foy et devocion duquel en Espagne, selon ses croniques, Dieu fist arrester le soleil ou ciel tant et si longuement qu'il ot desconfit les ennemis de la foy.

[The valiant and brave Charlemagne must not be forgotten at this point, for the faith and devotion for which, in Spain, according to the chronicles, God made the sun halt in the heavens so long that he destroyed the enemies of the faith].¹⁸

That he most likely refers to the *Song of Roland* as the "chronicles" of Charlemagne suggests that, on the whole, he did not think there to be much practical difference between traditionally historiographical and literary works about the deeds of the ancestors. In general, Philippe here appears willing to gloss over the details—and implications—of genre for the sake of historical purpose.

In short, Philippe clearly aims to put the young king of France on a path laid out by the great knights of the past. He emphasizes that the correct way of chivalry has been established long ago. Indeed, it

...par les vaillans clerks et philosophes moraulx a este plainement descripte es livres auctentiques, sicomme es histories des ix preux, des batailles des roys, d'Alixandre, et des Rommains, ou livre de Titus Livius, Valerius Maximus, Vegecius de la chose chevalereuse, ou livre du gouvernement des princes, et de plusieurs autres.

[...has been fully described in truthful books by the brave clerics and moral philosophers, such as in the histories of the Nine Worthies, of the battles of kings, and of Alexander and the Romans, in the books of Titus Livy and Valerius Maximus, in Vegetius' book about chivalry, in the book about the government of princes, and of many others].¹⁹

His list of chivalric examples is therefore almost as extensive as is the history of successful martial endeavor. Perhaps not surprisingly, it includes the "ix preux," the Nine Worthies of David, Joshua, Judas Maccabeus, Hector, Caesar, Alexander, Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon. First identified by Jacques de Longuyon in the *Vœux du Paon* of ca. 1312, the Nine Worthies were quickly established as paragons of historical chivalry, and by the time of Philippe's writing were admired to the point that Keen can speak of a "cult."²⁰ As shown

¹⁸ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 255, chap. 237.

¹⁹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 380–81, chap. 271.

²⁰ Keen, *Chivalry*, 121–24. A fitting example of the esteem in which the Nine Worthies were held may be found in Guillaume de Machaut's *La Prise d'Alixandre*, written

above, Philippe heaps often effusive praise on virtually all of them individually as examples of the sort of chivalric behavior he wants Charles VI to follow. In the case of two of these, however, he presents a more nuanced picture: even though he refers to the “brave knight-hood that accompanied king Arthur” and to the deeds of Alexander, he also strongly speaks out *against* following their examples as we find them.²¹ He makes an important caveat with regard to the story of Arthur: “La vaillance aussi mondayne du roy Artus fu moult grande, mai l’ystoire de lui et des siens est si remplie de bourdes que l’ystoire de lui en demeure suspecte” [The worldly valiance of king Arthur was very great, but the history of him and of his men is so full of follies that his history becomes suspect].²² Indeed, although Arthur himself was an admirable man and a great knight, the transmission of his deeds, their representation in the written sources—i.e. in chivalric romance—

ca. 1369. At the very beginning of the work, Mars, the God of War, bemoans the loss of the Nine as follows:

mi bon et chier ami sont mort
 et fine par piteuse mort
 ce sont li bons rois Alixandres
 qui conquist angleterre et flandres
 et tant quist terre et mer parfonde
 quil fu signeur de tout le monde
 hector et cesar julius
 et puis judas machabeus
 david . josue . charlemainne
 et artus qui ot moult de peinne
 et dux godefroï de buillon
 qui par son or et son billon
 son sens . sa force . et sa vaillance
 et de son grant bien lexcellence
 mist toute en sa subjection
 la terre de promission
 ou au mains la plus grant partie
 en la fin y laissa la vie

[My virtuous and good friends now all lie cold and finished by a pitiful death. These are the good king Alexander, who conquered England and Flanders, and campaigned though so much of earth and ocean he became lord of all the world; Hector and Julius Caesar, and afterward Judas Maccabeus; David, Joshua, Charlemagne, and Arthur, who suffered mightily, and Duke Godfrey of Bouillon, who, through his gold and wealth, his cunning, his power, his valor, and the excellence of his great virtue, made subject to him all of the promised land, or at least its greater part; there in the end he laid down his life.]

Guillaume de Machaut, *La Prise d'Alixandre*, ed. and trans. R. Barton Palmer (New York and London, 2002), 40–43.

²¹ See notes 2 and 19, respectively.

²² Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 222, chap. 229.

has corrupted the story to the point that it can no longer be accepted. This applies to the stories of Arthur and his knights, and to others as well:

Il est escript que Jesuscrist mon Pere represente la vraye instruction au Crestien, laquelle doit estre en vraye consolacion et doulce edification, et par consequant les operacions et gouvernemens des ancien peres, roys, princes, et seigneurs, a toy, Beau Filz, doivent estre un exemple de ton gouvernement moral; c'est assavoir que tu doys ensuir les œuvres des vaillans et des bons et fuir le contraire. Et pource est il expedient, Beau Filz, pour ton gouvernement [sic], que tu (te) doyes garder de toy trop delicter es escriptures qui sont apocrifas, et par espécial des livres et des romans qui sont rempliz de bourdes et qui attrayent le lysant souvent a impossibilite, a folie, vanite et pechie, comme les livres des bourdes de Lancelot et semblables, comme les bourdes des Veuz du Payen, qui nagueres furent composees par un legier compaignon, dicteur de chancons et de virelays, qui estoit de la ville d'Arras.

[It is written that Jesus Christ, my Father, represents the true teaching to the Christian, which must be both true consolation and sweet teaching, and consequently the deeds and governments of the old fathers, kings, princes, and lords, should be an example for your moral government, Beautiful Son; that is to say that you must follow the works of the valiant and good ones, and avoid the opposite. And because of that it is beneficial for your rule, Beautiful Son, that you should avoid finding too much enjoyment in apocryphal writings, and especially books and *romans* that are filled with follies and that attract the reader often to impossibilities, to madness, vanity and sin, such as the books of the follies of Lancelot and the like, such as the follies of the *Vœux du Paon*, that have recently been composed by some lightweight fellow, a singer of songs and *virelays*, who was from the city of Arras].²³

The “escritures...apocrifas” about Arthur and his knights should thus be avoided as spurious follies. However, Philippe argues that not only the tales of the Round Table should be ignored, but also the *Vœux du Paon* of Jacques de Longuyon, ironically the very work in which the Nine Worthies were first introduced.²⁴ The reason why Philippe takes exception to the *Vœux* appears to be that it tells the story of Alexander, another of the Worthies whom he, rather paradoxically, both admires and thinks unworthy to serve as an example of good chivalry:

²³ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 220–21, chap. 229.

²⁴ R. L. Graeme Ritchie, *The Buik of Alexander*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh, London, 1921–1929).

Tu doys savoir, Beau Filz, que le roy Alixandre, en briefves paroles, selon les ystoires fu bastars, et un des plus grans tyrans qui ayt en ce monde et auquel troys grans vices regnerent publiquement, qui sont detestables et doivent estre a tout roy naturel et a tout vaillant chevalier, c'est assavoir de extreme tyrannie et vaine gloire au quart degree; la seconde si fu une extreme et horrible cruaulte; et la tierce si fu luxure publique et desmesuree, sicomme il appert clerement par les livres de ses conquestes et de sa vie.

[You must know, Beautiful Son, in few words, that king Alexander, according to the histories, was a bastard, and was one of the greatest tyrants this world has seen, and that three great vices, that are despicable and should be despised by every natural king and brave knight, openly controlled him, these being extreme tyranny and vainglory up to the fourth degree; the second was an extreme and horrible cruelty; and the third was open and disproportionate lust as is shown clearly by the books about his conquests and his life].²⁵

Some issues are especially interesting here. Ostensibly the reasons for Philippe's dismissals of Arthur and Alexander as examples differ. The argument against Arthur and Arthurian romance appears based on what we may perhaps call literary criticism: though Arthur himself was a great man, the tale of him and his knights has been corrupted over time, to the point that contemporary sources, truly apocryphal writings, are filled with nothing but follies and impossibilities. The romances do no longer represent the true nature of the Knights of the Round Table, and therefore can hardly serve as instances of the good behavior of Arthur. The case against Alexander, on the other hand, is more a moral one: Alexander, by virtue of being a bad human being, simply would make a bad example to follow.

However, there are some things that tie these two together. Even though Philippe's criticism of Arthur and his knights appears based on matters of transmission, he is also most certainly concerned about the moral impact the romances of Arthur and his knights have on their audience. As we have seen above, these tales "attract the reader often to impossibilities, to madness, vanity and sin."²⁶ They leave the audience "enyvres d'oultrecuidance et animez en la doctrine des belles bourdes, contenues et manifestees en vaillance mondaine de Gauvain

²⁵ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 220–21, chap. 229. On Philippe's ambivalent attitude toward Alexander the Great see also Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas' contribution in this volume.

²⁶ See note 23.

et de Lancelot" [drunk on presumption and moved by the doctrine of pretty follies, kept and manifested in the worldly valiance of Gawain and Lancelot].²⁷ Concern about the historical veracity in these works therefore goes hand in hand with the worry that these examples, if followed, would have a detrimental effect on the reader. Conversely, even though Philippe appears to disapprove of Alexander on matters of character, there may be some literary reasons as well. Though we cannot know with any certainty what he refers to when he speaks of "les livres de ses conquestes et de sa vie" (these may, for instance, include the *Roman d'Alixandre* or its composite branches), he clearly counted the *Vœux du Paon* among them.²⁸ Philippe therefore quite probably railed against Alexander as he had found him in chivalric romance, the very same genre he finds to be so corrupted, so full of "follies," in the case of the stories of Arthur and his knights. In both the case of Arthur and Alexander we can therefore say that Philippe deems the sources that tell their stories—chivalric romances—both corrupted and corrupting. It is important to note that of the Nine Worthies, Arthur and Alexander were most prominently represented in romance, which raises the question of whether or not Philippe discarded them as examples simply *because* they appeared in romances.

That this may be so is hinted at when we have a look at the follies that make the stories of Arthur and the *Vœux* so unreliable and morally corrupting, and disqualify these works as sources of examples for the instruction of Charles VI. What Philippe thinks sets the Arthurian romances and the *Vœux du Paon* apart from other tales is "amer par amours," "fin'amors," what we now refer to as courtly love. Indeed, courtly love appears to poison their otherwise beneficial message:

... combien que les dictes ystoires et bourdes attraient les lisans a vaillance de chevalerie, toutesfois elles attrayent, qui pis est, a amer par amours, qui mal se puet faire sans grant pechie en attrayant au pechie de luxure

[...even though these histories and follies draw those reading them to the bravery of chivalry, nevertheless they draw them, which is worse, to courtly love, which can hardly happen without great sin by drawing people to the sin of lust].²⁹

²⁷ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 1: 397, chap. 76.

²⁸ *The Medieval French Roman d'Alixandre*, eds. E. C. Armstrong et al., 7 vols. (Princeton, 1937).

²⁹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* 2: 221, chap. 229.

The occurrence of courtly love in the stories of Arthur and the *Vœux* draws people to lust—the very sin Alexander is so signally guilty of—and this by itself justifies their dismissal.

It may be surprising that Philippe worries so much about the real-life effects of what at first appears little more than a literary convention. How could a stylized commonplace threaten the education of the young French king? To understand this, we must have a look at the effect of romance on fourteenth-century chivalry. Philippe was not the only one to think that the knighthood of his day needed reform, nor was he the only one to suggest that the best solution for knighthood's problems was a return to the models found in the literary sources of chivalric excellence. Indeed, in arguing for texts that discuss Joshua and Judas Maccabeus, Godfrey and Charlemagne, and against those that deal with Arthur and Alexander as illustrations of good knighthood, Philippe contributed to an ongoing discussion about the role of literary sources in the reform of knighthood.

Although Philippe de Mézières was a very opinionated man, his argument that knighthood was in transition was quite accurate. In the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, certain factors threatened the status of knighthood, leading to what Peter Dembowski has referred to as “the crisis of real chivalry.”³⁰ The period saw great changes in the practice of warfare. The direct confrontation of open battle, ideally suited to the chivalric way, was increasingly avoided, more emphasis falling on siege warfare and the economical warfare of the *chevauchée*.³¹ In the relatively rare cases when full-scale battle was joined, skilled infantry and missile troops mostly drawn from the middle and lower classes increasingly challenged the dominance of chivalric heavy cavalry. The defeat of chivalric armies by infantry formations—such as at Stirling Bridge (1297), Courtrai (1302), Crécy (1346), or Sempach (1386)—further undermined the military justification of chivalry's social supremacy: its function as bulwark and protection of the land and people. In addition to these military developments, the ubiquitous wars of the period saw ever greater evidence of the dark side of knighthood, as knights, sometimes fighting as mercenaries, inflicted

³⁰ Peter F. Dembowski, *Jean Froissart and his Meliador: Context, Craft, and Sense* (Lexington, 1983), 123.

³¹ For a fine description of these developments, see Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years' War: England and France at War c. 1300–1450* (Cambridge, 1988), 37–90.

a reign of violence on most of Western Europe, often to subsidize an ever more costly chivalric way of life. Critics—clerical and chivalric—excoriated knighthood, and sought reform that would return chivalry to its erstwhile greatness.³² As did Philippe, they found the bedrock of this reform in the past; however, some found it in the very sources that Philippe deemed unworthy.

Romance was a form that from the very beginning had aimed to illustrate good chivalric behavior: among the adventures were found the perfect courtesy of Gawain, the perfect prowess of Lancelot, or the spiritual perfection of Galahad. As the fourteenth century went on, knights, themselves often readers of romance, increasingly turned to it for guidance.³³ On a superficial level, the middle of the century saw the creation of secular orders of chivalry that often explicitly drew their inspiration from the pages of romance. The Order of the Garter, for instance, founded by Edward III in 1348, aimed to revive Arthur's Round Table, while Charles VI's grandfather John II of France's Order of the Star, which was created in 1352, imitated the Order of the Free Palace from *Perceforest*.³⁴ On a more fundamental level, formal codes of chivalry, mostly written with reformist intent, started to include romance elements in the description of good knighthood. For instance, the French knight Geoffrey of Charny, who wrote his popular *Livre de Chevalerie* around 1352 as a manual for the members of the Order of the Star, insisted that the good knight should love loyally and set out to accomplish deeds of arms in honor of his lady, thereby mirroring the behavior of Arthur's companions. Indeed, almost at the very beginning of his work, he highlights romance *Frauendienst* as an important part of a chivalric education:

There is another category of men at arms who when they begin are so naïve that they are unaware of the great honor that they could win through deeds of arms; nevertheless they succeed so well because they put their hearts into winning the love of a lady. And they are so fortunate that their ladies themselves, from the great honor and superb qualities that reside in them, do not want to let them tarry nor delay in any way the winning of that honor to be achieved by deeds of arms, and

³² Keen, *Chivalry*, 233.

³³ Richard W. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 1999), 30–33; Elspeth Kennedy, "The Knight as Reader of Arthurian Romance," *Culture and the King: The Social Implications of the Arthurian Legend, Essays in Honor of Valerie M. Lagorio*, eds. Martin B. Schichtman and James P. Carley (Albany, 1994), 70–90.

³⁴ Keen, *Chivalry* 191.

advise them on this, and then command them to set out and put all their efforts into winning renown and great honor where it is to be sought by valiant men; these ladies urge them on beyond any of their earlier aspirations. Such naïve men-at-arms may nevertheless be so fortunate as to encounter such good adventures that their deeds of prowess and achievements in a number of places and fields of battle are held to be of great account. And they should be praised and honored, and also so should be the noble ladies who have inspired them and through whom they have made their name. And one should indeed honor, serve, and truly love these noble ladies and others whom I hold to be ladies who inspire men to great achievement, and it is thanks to such ladies that men become good knights and men-at-arms.³⁵

Adventure in the service of ladies is therefore instrumental in transforming a “naïve” knight into a good knight who is renowned for his prowess. Its advantage is not restricted to young knights newly entering the profession of arms; well-established knights, too, can reap the benefits of fighting in a lady’s service. By urging both aspirant knights and their senior colleagues to seek adventure as *Frauendienst*, Charny has them engage in practical application of romance themes.

There is ample evidence to suggest that knights took this turn to romance to heart. It is clear that this did not always lead to good results: Sir Thomas Gray, in the *Scalacronica*, relates how at the siege of Norham Castle, Sir William Marmion, who had been given a gilded helmet by his beloved and had been told to make it renowned, attacked the Scottish army by himself. Lancelot may have been victorious in such a situation, but Sir William Marmion barely escaped with his life.³⁶ However, there are many more successful instances.³⁷ The biography of Philippe’s rough contemporary Boucicaut, arguably the most famous knight of the period, shows him taking to love at the very beginning of his chivalric career and fighting his way across Europe in the service of his lady. The anonymous author of the work explicitly connects Boucicaut’s love service with the Arthurian romances, and suggests that he was hardly alone:

³⁵ *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context, and Translation*, ed. and trans. Richard W. Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy (Philadelphia, 1996), 95.

³⁶ Mentioned in Keen, *Chivalry*, 117. See also Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, 212.

³⁷ Keen, *Chivalry*, 117.

Amours oste paour et donne hardement, fait oublier toute peine et prendre en gré tout le travail que on porte pour la chose amee. Et qu'il soit vray, qui veult lire les histories des vaillans trespassez, assez trouvera de ce preuve, si comme on lit de Lancelot, de Tristan et de plusieurs autres que Amours fist bons et a renommee attaindre; et mesmement en noz vivans assez de nobles hommes en France et d'autre part en veons et avons veu, si comme on dit de messire Othe de Gransson, du bon connestable de Sensarre et d'autres assez, qui lonc seroit a dire, lesquels le service d'Amours ot fait devenir vaillans et bien moriginez.

[Love removes fear and gives courage, makes one forget all trouble and accept all the work done for the beloved. And that this is true, everyone who wants to read the histories of the valiant dead can find enough of this matter, as one can read of Lancelot, of Tristan, and of many others that Love made good and made achieve renown; and even in our lifetimes we see and have seen enough noblemen of France and of other regions, whom the service of Love has made brave and well known, such as is said of Sir Oton de Grandson, of the good constable of Sancerre, and of many others, which would be lengthy to relate].³⁸

Boucicaut, in seeking out adventure in the service of ladies, walks a path previously tread upon by such illustrious knights as the Savoyard knight Oton de Grandson, the Constable of France Louis de Sancerre, and many others, which is ultimately traceable to that of Tristan and Lancelot as found in the romances.³⁹ Indeed, romance love service and the service of ladies was at the heart of Boucicaut's chivalric practice; his chivalric Order, the Order of the White Lady on the Green Shield, demanded that its members spend a set amount of time in service of ladies, and that they are "tenu de droit de vouloir garder et deffendre l'onneur, l'estat, les biens, la renommee et la louange de toutes dames et damoiselles de noble lignee" [held to willingly guard and defend the honor, the estate, the goods, the renown and the praise of all ladies and young ladies of noble lineage].⁴⁰

³⁸ *Le Livre des Fais du Bon Messire Jehan le Maingre, dit Bouciquaut, Mareschal de France et Gouverneur de Jennes*, ed. Denis Lalande (Geneva, 1985), 27–28; translations of the author.

³⁹ Ironically, Otho de Grandson was a close associate of Philippe whom he included in the list of members of the Order of the Passion he attached to the third redaction of its rule. See Auguste Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits contenant la règle de la *Militia passionis Christi* de Philippe de Mézières," *Archives de L'Orient Latin* vol. 1 (Paris, 1881), 362–63.

⁴⁰ *Le Livre des Fais du Bon Messire Jehan le Maingre*, 164.

In other words, as knighthood entered a period of transition, and both knights and outside commentators sought for a guiding light in the deeds of the heroes of old, some of the most powerful and most renowned of the age believed that romance could contribute to the reform of chivalry, and that it could hold a valuable place in a chivalric education. Kings created chivalric orders in the image of the Round Table, and knights were urged to let the service of ladies guide them to true chivalry. Philippe de Mézières, in urging the young Charles VI to ignore romances such as the tales of Arthur and the *Vœux du Paon* in favor of the Bible and the tales of the Romans, Godfrey and Charlemagne, therefore took a path strongly differing from that of some of the most famous knights of his time, and indeed from that of Charles VI's own grandfather John II, the founder of the Order of the Star. Indeed, what they saw as an important step towards good knighthood—courtly love and love service—he saw as the greatest threat facing it. He strongly opposed “ceulx qui veillent devenir preux comment qu’il aille, et font leur moyens d’amer par amours pour parvenir a vaillance” [those who want to become brave any which way, and go through courtly love to reach valiance] which, by this time may have included a significant part of the French court.⁴¹

Why Philippe thought that “amer par amours” could never be the basis of good knighthood, is perhaps explained in his treatise for married ladies, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage*. Here he briefly discusses courtly love and its social effects. He talks about it within an extended medical allegory on the ills threatening his audience, calling it “passion cardiaque” [passion of the heart]; it is caused by factors such as fine dress and sumptuous meals, and arises “quant la dame encline volentiers l’oraille a bourdeurs et flatteurs et faiseurs de virelays et, que pis vault, quant elle se delicte en la messagerie et ou rapport des messagiers...” [when the lady voluntarily lends her ear to fools and flatterers and makers of virelays and, what is even worse, when she finds delight in sending messages and in the reports of messengers].⁴² On a more conceptual level, this love is characterized by the fact that

⁴¹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 1: 85, Prologue.

⁴² Philippe de Mézières, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage*, ed. Joan B. Williamson (Washington, 1993), 288.

combien que a la passion cardiaque, c'est assavoir a luxure, la planete Venus ait plaine domination, pour confourmer les maulx qui en viennent elle a pris a son ayde la planete de Saturne, qui est maistresse d'es-mouvoir tourbillons, guerres et dissensions et mortelle trayson... Venus donques la bien pignie et Saturne la tourblee gouvernent la passion cardiaque.

[even though, when it comes to the passion of the heart, that is to say lust, Venus has complete control, to allow for the evils that come of it, she has taken the planet Saturn as her helper, who is mistress of arousing whirlwinds, wars, and dissent and mortal treason.... Therefore well-groomed Venus and shifty Saturn control the passion of the heart].⁴³

In courtly love, Venus shares her rule with Saturn, who unleashes his evils upon mankind. If the folly that makes romance unacceptable is courtly love, the "madness, vanities and sin" that flow from it are these "whirlwinds, war, dissent and mortal treason."

This, more than anything else, may explain why Philippe prefers the examples of Judas Maccabeus, Godfrey of Bouillon and Charlemagne to those of Arthur and the Alexander of the *Vœux du Paon*. What disqualifies the stories of these latter two may not be the problematic transmission of the Arthurian romances, or the problematic nature of Alexander; rather it may be that they discuss "amer par amours," could incite the reader to the practice of courtly love, and therefore could foster discord and strife within Western Christianity. As such they immediately undermine Philippe's most ardent desire. The Order of the Passion, his life's work, was to spearhead a new crusade to recapture the Holy Land, but before setting out it would heal the wounds of the West. It would help end the Schism of the Church, assist in bringing about peace between England and France, and thus contribute to a general pacification of Christianity. The war, dissent, and treason that accompany courtly love are diametrically opposed to what Philippe was trying to achieve. As such, to teach the young Charles VI, a possible leader of the Order of the Passion, about knighthood and governance by urging him to read works that undermine the Order's goals, would be a folly by itself.

Philippe followed what was by 1389 somewhat of a convention in suggesting Charles VI read of the deeds of the heroes of old in order to learn the path to true chivalry. Indeed, the great and good of French—and wider European—society had already taken to literary

⁴³ Mézières, *Le Livre de la Vertu*, 287.

models for some time. However, in the age of Charny and Boucicaut, he stands out for the distaste with which he approaches courtly love and the service of ladies. This distaste is all-encompassing: courtly love leads to divisions, which the Latin West, at a crossroads in history, can ill afford itself. The effects that courtly love and the works that speak of it—such as the Arthurian romances and the *Vœux du Paon*—have upon their audience alone warrants that they be cast aside as historically corrupted and morally corrupting, for the ancestors themselves would never have stooped so low. I would like to suggest that this pervasive distaste of courtly love makes it very unlikely that Philippe, as Joan Williamson suggests, directed Charles VI to a library that included historiographical works on the deeds of Godfrey of Bouillon, as well as the fourteenth-century *Chevalier du Cygne et Godefroid de Bouillon*.⁴⁴ The latter, as are all the works in the Second Crusade Cycle, has a strong presence of courtly love—indeed, far more than are earlier works dealing with Godfrey and his extended family. If Philippe did refer to a library with both chronicles in prose and epics in verse, it is more likely that he would have directed Charles VI to the works of the First Crusade Cycle. Any combination of works from the First Cycle—say, the *Chevalier du Cygne* and the *Chanson d'Antioche*—which could rightfully be termed a book “du Chevalier au cysgne, et de Godeffroy de Builon, de la terre d'oultre mer”—would be far less offensive to Philippe's sensibilities, and would fit his educational goals far better.

In sum, Philippe suggests that literature can be both a valuable tool and a serious impediment on Charles VI's road towards true knight-hood. When carefully selected for pious chivalric content, it provides valuable examples that each aspirant knight would do well to imitate. However, when the narratives of heroism on the battlefield become intermingled with narratives of heroism in the bedroom, this exemplary function evaporates. Works such as the Arthurian romances and the *Vœux du Paon* only lead the reader to the sins of luxury and wrath, to discord and treason. Romance and courtly love are, for Philippe, a social concern; sources of continuous division, they threaten not just the project of the Order of the Passion, but the future of chivalry, and ultimately the future stability of the Christian West itself.

⁴⁴ See note 17.

UNE EXEMPLARITÉ DÉCONSTRUITE: LA POLÉMIQUE SUR ALEXANDRE ET LE PROCÈS DE LA LITTÉRATURE DE FICTION DANS *LE SONGE DU VIEIL PELERIN*

Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas

L'Antiquité païenne n'a droit qu'à une place limitée dans *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, tant Philippe de Mézières, pour échapper à la vision horrifique d'un présent et d'un passé proche corrompus, se tourne vers l'avenir d'une « alchimie » chrétienne rétablie¹. À l'inverse de l'Antiquité biblique, elle ne saurait donc être que très rarement exploitée à des fins de légitimation d'un idéal pour son époque. Même s'il recommande à Charles VI de lire les histoires anciennes afin de parfaire son instruction, il ne développe pas les exemples de l'Antiquité autant qu'on aurait pu l'attendre. Par leur récurrence, les références à Alexandre le Grand constituent néanmoins une exception, mais sur le mode du paradoxe, car l'inscription de son souvenir s'allie à une tentative de son effacement. *Le songe du vieil pelerin* démystifie en effet la belle image du roi conquérant et sage qui prévaut au XIV^e siècle dans les textes en langue française. Dans le premier livre, Philippe de Mézières évoque à deux reprises le héros, mais avec un apparent désintérêt, tandis que dans le second livre, lorsqu'il s'approprie la légende de sa filiation avec Nectanébus, sa condamnation porte davantage sur le pharaon et ses pratiques astrologiques. Mais ensuite le troisième livre expose un violent réquisitoire contre le conquérant devenu l'incarnation de la corruption des tyrans². Avec cette mise à mort de l'exemplarité que le Moyen Âge lui a souvent prêtée, c'est une polémique directement ouverte contre les auteurs médiévaux de fiction qui l'ont célébré, ainsi

¹ Ce travail a bénéficié du soutien de l'Agence Nationale de la Recherche française (projet ANR-09-BLAN-0307-01), de la Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais et du Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche.

² *Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin*, ed. G.W. Coopland (Cambridge, 1969), 1: 224–27, chap. 10–11; 324–25, chap. 49–50; 336–37, chap. 52; 2: 594–620, chap. 140–60; 2: 220–25, chap. 229–30; 238–45, chap. 234–35; 377–81, chap. 271. Traduction en français moderne de Joël Blanchard, *Le Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008); Dora Bell, *Étude sur le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin* (Genève, 1955).

qu'une réfutation implicite d'un *leitmotiv* des miroirs du prince, à savoir la science et la sagesse d'un roi instruit par Aristote³.

Si Philippe de Mézières retrouve alors la condamnation sans appel des théologiens ou d'un historien comme Orose, c'est qu'à ses yeux Alexandre n'appartient pas seulement à l'histoire ancienne, révolue et morte⁴. À travers les multiples œuvres qui lui sont toujours consacrées, qui souvent réduisent son altérité et l'assimilent aux valeurs médiévales, le Macédonien échappe au passé pour appartenir au présent. Il a encore le pouvoir d'une figure vivante dans les esprits grâce à des discours mensongers, à l'écriture de poètes ou, selon Philippe de Mézières, à la parole vive de chevaliers. D'où la nécessité de désamorcer ce pouvoir de nuisance qu'il exercerait. Lorsqu'il dénonce les pouvoirs de la littérature, qu'il classe parmi les manifestations pernicieuses de la flatterie des courtisans, la figure d'Alexandre lui sert ainsi d'exemple pour s'inscrire en faux contre la mise en fiction idéalisante des personnages historiques et leur instrumentalisation au service d'intérêts personnels.

Dans sa troisième partie, *Le songe du vieil pelerin* s'offre comme un miroir du prince, dispensé par l'allégorie Vérité au jeune roi de France. Philippe de Mézières, qui présente Charles VI au moment de son entrée dans l'âge adulte, n'y développe certes pas un manuel de pédagogie princière. L'évocation de l'échiquier contient néanmoins un programme de lectures que Vérité lui fixe pour le conforter dans sa multiplication des vrais besants (2 : 220–224, chap. 229). On sait que l'idéal du roi lettré, savant et sage, sage parce que savant, était depuis longtemps prôné par les auteurs de miroirs du prince et qu'à la fin du XIV^e siècle nombreux, à commencer par Christine de Pizan, étaient ceux qui célébraient sa réalisation en la personne de Charles V⁵. À

³ Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, *Les Romans d'Alexandre. Aux frontières de la chanson de geste et du roman* (Paris, 1998).

⁴ George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, ed. D. J. A. Ross (Cambridge, 1956).

⁵ Dans l'Occident médiéval, bien après la renaissance carolingienne, cet idéal du prince lettré s'est particulièrement développé en Angleterre, sous le règne d'Henri II Plantagenêt, à travers les ouvrages de nombreux clercs, dont le plus connu est le *Policraticus* de Jean de Salisbury (1159). Pierre de Blois dans ses *Lettres*, Giraud de Barri dans son *De principis instructione Liber* promeuvent aussi cet idéal du roi savant. Voir Reto R. Bezzola, *Les Origines et la Formation de la littérature courtoise en Occident (500–1200)* (Paris, 1944–1963), 2^{ème} Partie, t. II, 326–66; 3^{ème} Partie, t. I, 149–207, 269–311; Jean Flori, *L'Essor de la chevalerie (XI^e–XII^e siècles)* (Genève, 1986), 304–330; Marc Aurell, *L'Empire des Plantagenêt* (Paris, 2003), 106–13. Sur les miroirs du prince du XIV^e siècle, on se reportera à Jacques Krynen, *Idéal du prince et pouvoir royal*

travers les conseils de Vérité, Philippe de Mézières évoque implicitement les commandes de livres savants qu'a multipliées Charles V, bien qu'il ne souligne pas sa politique de traduction en langue vernaculaire, d'autant que lui, Philippe de Mezières, recommande la lecture en latin des textes sacrés et savants (2 : 223, chap. 229)⁶. *L'Ethique* et la *Politique* de Nicole Oresme, « tressaige philosophe et theologien maistre Nichole Oresme de Lisieux », sont alors mentionnées, mais sans être présentées comme des traductions d'Aristote, ainsi que les deux miroirs du prince les plus diffusés à son époque et déjà traduits en français, *Du gouvernement des Princes*, l'adaptation du traité de Gilles de Rome par Henri de Gauchy, et le *Policraticus*, traduit sous l'impulsion de Charles V par Denis Foulechat :

Encores, Beau Filz, tu te doys souverainement delicter de lire et estudier les deux livres solennelz que compousa le tressaige philosophe et theologien maistre Nichole Oresme de Lisieux, a la requeste de ton bon pere, qui fu saige et preudomme; et autres livres, c'est assavoir les livres d'ethiques et de politiques, qui singulierement appartiennent a ta royale magesté pour ton gouvernement et le gouvernement de ton peuple. Et si ne doys pas oublier le noble livre du Gouvernement des Princes, les hystoires des Rommains auctentiques, c'est assavoir le livre de Titus Livius, Valerius Maximus, Senecques le moral philosophe, et Boece de consolacion, et les enseignemens d'Aristote, et toutes autres hystoires des payens qui sont auctentiques, voire a leurs premiers volumes et non pas entrelaciés et parez de bourdes et rumeurs (2 : 222, chap. 229).

Or, les auteurs de ces traités, comme ceux du *Songe du Vergier* et d'autres écrits didactiques, ne cessent de répéter leur conviction que la science donne les moyens d'un juste gouvernement, qu'elle constitue l'un des meilleurs garde-fous contre la tyrannie⁷.

Au XIV^e siècle, le *Songe du Vergier* et le *Policratique* de Denis Foulechat déroulent alors chacun une liste de rois lettrés. Les liens

en France à la fin du Moyen Âge (1380–1440) (Paris, 1981), *L'Empire du roi. Idées et croyances politiques en France, XIII^e–XV^e siècle* (Paris, 1993) et à Joël Blanchard et Jean-Claude Mühlethaler, *Écriture et pouvoir à l'aube des temps modernes* (Paris, 2002).

⁶ Sur les traductions du XIV^e siècle, Serge Lusignan, *Parler vulgairement, les intellectuels et la langue française aux XIII^e et XIV^e siècles* (Paris et Montréal, 1987).

⁷ Denis Foulechat, *Le Policratique de Jean de Salisbury*, éd. Charles Brucker, livres IV et VIII, « Tyrans, princes et prêtres: Jean de Salisbury, *Policratique* IV et VIII », *Le Moyen français* 21 (1987); livres I et III (Genève, 1994); livre V (Genève, 2006); *Le Songe du Vergier*, éd. M. Schnerb-Lièvre (Paris, 1982); Henri de Gauchy, *Li Livres du gouvernement des rois*, éd. S. P. Molenaer (New York, 1966).

historiques entre Alexandre et Aristote fournissent l'un des exemples païens les plus prestigieux, d'autant plus souvent répété que les auteurs écrivent à une époque de vulgarisation de la pensée d'Aristote. Dans son long prologue, Denis Foulechat inscrit Alexandre juste après Salomon et son panégyrique détaille le contenu de l'éducation reçue d'Aristote. Ce sont un enseignement d'éthique et de politique, qui lui inculque le souci du bien public et de l'harmonie du corps social, un enseignement de philosophie naturelle, sur les secrets de la nature, d'où l'éloge de son exploration sous-marine dans un batyscaphe, et aussi d'astronomie et d'astrologie :

Qui esleva et acrust si grandement Alixandre de Macedoine que encore li demeure le nom de Alixandre le grant, fors le sage et subtil conseil du souverain philosophe Aristote, le quel, si comme dit Agellius ou livre *Athicarum noctium*, les natures de toutes choses li enseignoit et le gouvernement de son corps, de ses royaumes, les condicions de ses gens selon la nature des paÿs et contrees li monstroient et selon diverses natures, condicions, estas, nobles et non nobles, riches, moiens et petis, vieux et jeunes, chevaliers, escuiers, bourgeois, marcheurs, laboureurs, lui apprenoit a tenir a amour chascun selon son estat, si que chascun estoit content de son salaire? En lui monstrant grans fais a seurement entreprendre, maintenir sagement, noblement accomplir finances senz personnes troubler, enseignoit a trouver jugemens de tous senz leur amis grever. Experimens de nature secrés, gouvernement de son corps et ordenances et commencemens de grans fais selon l'influence du ciel et le cours des planetes et le conseil des philosophes sagement enseignoit, comme le pere du dit Alixandre, Philippe le roy de Macedoine, li avoit commandé, si comme il escripst au dit philosophe Aristote que plus avoit joie que il estoit né au temps d'Aristote que il n'avoit de sa nativité, pour la vraie philosophie de Aristote que il veoit et ouoit; car plus consideroit la philosophie en sa vie que en sa parole. Et qui eust senz grant philosophie appris a ce tresgrant roy a soy mettre dedenz un tonnel de voirre et entrer en la mer veoir la nature et coustume des poissons et comme soutillement par nature senz art il guerroyent et guectent secretement contre leur ennemis? Il n'est pas sage qui ne s'en doie esmerveiller. Et, si comme dit Seneque, le tres glorieux roy vult apprendre geometrie pour savoir comment si petite piece de terre avoit occupé si grant terre de tant de royaumes, et disoit soy estre moins veritablement nommé le grant Alixandre; car rien grant ne pouoit en une poingnee estre contenu, en quoy par geometrie avoit conclus sa grant humilité⁸.

⁸ Éd. Brucker, *Le Policratique, les livres I et III*, 83–84.

La suite du prologue introduit Jules César et Charlemagne, avant de se clore sur une vision de l'âge d'or comme époque où le pouvoir est aux mains soit des philosophes soit de rois qui étudient la philosophie⁹.

Philippe de Mezières ne reprend pas sous cette forme l'idéal du roi savant et le nom d'Alexandre est en outre absent de son chapitre sur l'instruction. Il est néanmoins fortement suggéré, mais pour sa condamnation, à travers la mention des *Vœux du Paon*, œuvre violemment mise à l'index parce qu'assimilée, selon un jugement à l'évidence très partial, à une tentation du démon qui pousserait aux péchés de luxure et d'orgueil, puis à travers celle du *Livre des Maccabées*, qui s'ouvre sur une dénonciation bien connue de l'orgueil du Macédonien :

[...] tu doys ensuir les œuvres des vaillans et des bons et fuir le contraire. Et pource est il expedient, Beau Filz, pour ton gouvernement, que tu (te) doyes garder de toy trop delicter es escriptures qui sont aprocrifes, et par espial des livres et des romans qui sont rempliz de bourdes et qui attrayent le lysant souvent a impossibilité, a folie, vanité et pechié, comme les bourdes des Veuz du Payen, qui nagueres furent composees par un legier compaignon, dicteur de chançons et de virelays, qui estoit de la ville d'Arras. Et combien que les dictes ystoires et bourdes attraient les lisans a vaillance de chevalerie, toutesfois elles attrayent, qui pis est, a amer par amours, qui mal se puet faire sans grant pechié en attrayant au pechié de luxure, comme il fu largement touchié par le Pauvre Pelerin en son livre ou chappitres de vaillance et d'amer par amours.

Il souffit, Beau Filz, pour tout cognoistre, dit la royne, et le bien a difference du mal, que telx livres perilleux a l'ame une toute seule foys tu les oy lire, combien qu'il vaulsist mieulx, par adventure, qu'ilz n'eussent esté presentez a ta royalle magesté. Beau Filz, pour haulte prouesse et treshaute vaillance acquerre, laissant les ystoires aprocrifes (et) douteuses, en la Bible tu trouveras souveraine proesse et vaillance veritable et approuvee, c'est assavoir es livres des juges et des Machabees est le vrai miroir de bon gouvernement quant au roy, aux chevetaines et au peuple, et le contrayre aussi. Et es livres de Salemon tu trouveras le gouvernement moral de ta personne royalle et de tous tes subgiez, voire descripts par le doys de Dieu, c'est par le Saint Esperit¹⁰. (2 : 220–21, chap. 229)

⁹ *Le Policratique*, prologue, 84–85.

¹⁰ S'il n'introduit pas non plus le nom de Jacques de Longuyon, le manuscrit 2683 de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal mentionne, au folio 98 verso, avec la ville d'Araines / Avesnes : « les bourdes des Veus du Paan, qui nagueres furent composees par un legier compaignon, dicteur de chansons et de virelais, qui estoit de la ville d'Araines. » Les *Vœux du Paon* ont été édités par R.L. Graeme Ritchie dans John Barbour, *The Buik of Alexander* (Édimbourg et Londres, 1921–1929, vol. II–IV) et par Camillus Casey, *Les Vœux du Paon de Jacques de Longuyon, an edition of the ms. of the P redaction*

La mention suivante de l'*Ethique* et de la *Politique* éveillait aussi bien sûr le nom d'Aristote, mais si Philippe de Mézières le cite peu après, dans sa liste d'œuvres savantes, de surcroît à travers la mention des «enseignemens d'Aristote», c'est sans le relier explicitement ni à Oresme ni à Alexandre. Il ne rappelle pas non plus que le prologue de l'*Ethique* en français vantait la relation privilégiée d'Alexandre avec le philosophe, modèle implicite des liens d'Oresme et de Charles V :

En la confiance de l'aide de Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Crist, du commandement de tres noble et tres excellent prince Charles, par la grace de Dieu roy de France, je propose translater de latin en françois aucuns livres lesquelx fist Aristotle le souverain philosophe, qui fu docteur et conseilher du grant roy Alexandre. Et duquel la doctrine, pour la valeur et l'excellence de elle, a esté multipliee et en grant reputacion vers les sages presque par tout le monde¹¹.

L'occultation de l'image si diffusée d'Alexandre roi savant semble alors préparer le portrait à charge du Macédonien par Philippe de Mézières. Pourtant le rappel de cette éducation aurait pu se concilier avec une condamnation de la politique ultérieure du roi, si Philippe de Mézières avait souhaité retracer la déchéance d'une figure royale initialement bien douée et l'accuser de n'avoir pas su faire fructifier la science reçue, mais telle n'est pas sa perspective.

Au reste, le *Songe* montre qu'à l'alliance du roi et du philosophe, Philippe de Mézières préfère celle du roi et du prophète. Contrairement à de nombreux auteurs de miroirs du prince, il ne cite qu'un seul exemple de liens entre un souverain et un philosophe, l'influence de ce dernier s'exerçant alors sur un tyran. Sans qu'il donne les noms d'un récit étiologique qui vient de Jacques de Cessoles, l'histoire est celle de l'inventeur des échecs qui réussit à détourner un souverain de son despotisme par la pratique du jeu :

Beau Filz, dist la royne, il fu ja dit que a un roy qui estoit moult cruel et remply de tyrannie, et estoit redoubté et haiz, que le tiltre, Beau Filz, que tu seuffres, que on te baille en tes lectres royales, lequel tiltre assez largement cy dessus j'ay reprevé, au dit roy estoit bien afferent. Quel merveille, car il estoit si cruel que nul ne l'osoit reprendre de sa grant tyrannie.

(University of Columbia, 1956). Voir aussi les *Vœux du Paon* de Jacques de Longuyon, *originalité et rayonnement*, dir. Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas (Paris, 2011).

¹¹ Nicole Oresme, *Le Livre de Ethiques d'Aristote*, ed. Albert D. Menut (New York, 1940).

Ung saige philosophe fit et composa le gracieux livre des eschez, ou quel il descript quelx traiz le roy et la royne, les rocs et les offins, les chevaliers et les pions en l'eschequier doivant faire, or est assavoir moralisant la forme juste de gouvernement du roy et de tous les dessusdz et quelz ilz doivent estre selon droyt et rayson; et comment le roy, selon la loy de nature et moralle policie, se doit porter envers ses sugbiez et les subgiez envers lui. Or advint que le dit philosophe presenta au dit roy ruel les eschez et l'eschequier comme une chose estrange et nouvelle, en lui moustrant les trays du roy et des autres ou dit eschequier par maniere d'esbatement, le quel present fu assez plaisant au roy, et, jouant aux eschez a grant plaisance, devint ung pou plus debonnayre et y print amour ou dit philosophe. Le noble philosophe lors, quant il veit son point pour declairer l'exposicion des eschez au dit roy, il presenta le livre des eschez. Et pour abregier l'ystoire le roy le print en gré et par la bonne doctrine du livre et enseignement du philosophe le roy mua son gouvernement, laissa sa tyrannie et mena belle vie (2: 200, chap. 222)¹².

Est-ce alors un avertissement implicite lancé à Charles VI, devenu l'heureux bénéficiaire du jeu d'échecs spirituel de Philippe de Mézières? Philippe de Mézières aurait-il lui-même souhaité se donner l'autorité d'un philosophe? Plus encore, aurait-il admis un parallèle implicite entre l'enseignement qu'il délivre à Charles VI et celui d'Aristote à Alexandre? Rien n'est sûr à la lecture du *Songe*, mais un copiste a établi ce parallèle en sa faveur. Comme l'ont indiqué Philippe Contamine et Jacques Paviot dans leur édition récente de l'*Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, l'un des manuscrits du *Songe*, le BnF fr. 22542, montre en effet l'ajout au XV^e siècle d'un prologue, «Pour bien garder le livre», qui compare l'enseignement du maître des Célestins à celui qu'Aristote a dispensé au Macédonien, avec une référence au *Secret des Secrets*:

Ainsi comme Aristote estans a Athenes enseigna par son *Livre des Secrez* es Yndes Alixandre qui avoit esté son disciple, le bon religieux enseigna chez les Celestins par cest present livre ou chastel du Louvre, a Paris, le noble roy Charles le VI^e qui avoit esté son disciple¹³.

Or, dans *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, Philippe de Mézières évoque le *Secret des Secrets* à l'intérieur de sa condamnation violente de l'astrologie, comme nous allons le voir (1: 603, chap. 145). On peut ainsi douter

¹² Jacques de Cessoles, traduction médiévale de Jean Ferron, *Le Jeu des Eschaz moralisé*, éd. Alain Collet (Paris, 1999). Le jeu d'échecs aurait été inventé par le philosophe Xercès pour le tyran Evilmérodach, roi de Babylone, fils de Nabuchodonosor (129–32, 209–11).

¹³ *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire* (Paris, 2008), 38.

que cet auto-portrait lui eût agréé et que, à moins de se contredire, il eût souhaité rapprocher Charles VI d'Alexandre, lui qui stigmatise à la fois le tyran macédonien et tous ceux qui à son époque flattent les rois en les comparant à lui. Par ailleurs et plus généralement, au couple du roi et du philosophe il préfère donc celui du roi et du prophète et la fiction allégorique du songe l'exalte lui-même comme un prophète. Dans le chapitre sur l'instruction du roi, la part des lectures de la Bible et des ouvrages chrétiens, notamment la *Cité de Dieu*, est ainsi écrasante : l'éducation spirituelle prime sur l'éducation scientifique et politique, la sagesse sur la science (2 : 220–224, chap. 229). Le bon roi n'est pas sage parce que savant, il est d'abord sage et ensuite savant, le but ultime de son action étant le salut de son peuple et de la chrétienté, métaphorisé par la multiplication des besants. Le bon gouvernement de la chose publique, préoccupation certes très présente, est un instrument de cette aspiration spirituelle¹⁴. De tous les exemples de souverains qu'il donne, Philippe de Mézières ne mentionne le goût pour les livres qu'à propos de Charles V et de Charlemagne, et encore Charlemagne, comme Constantin, Héraclius, Théodose et Justinien, plutôt que d'incarner le modèle du prince savant, se distinguent à ses yeux surtout pour leur prouesse guerrière, qui annonce celle de Godefroy de Bouillon, dont la lecture de l'histoire est vivement recommandée (2 : 222–23, chap. 229).

D'autre part, il reste qu'au-delà des miroirs du prince, de l'*Alexandreis* de Gautier de Châtillon ou du *Roman d'Alexandre* d'Alexandre de Paris, le souvenir de l'enseignement d'Alexandre à Aristote s'était avant tout transmis grâce au *Secret des Secrets*, à travers la diffusion extraordinaire de cette œuvre attribuée au philosophe¹⁵. Or dans le *Songe*, selon la mise en scène choisie par Philippe, c'est l'allégorie Superstition, la Vieille, jadis « première chambrière du roy d'Égypte Tholomeus, d'Albumasar et du roy Neptanabus, souverains astrologiens » (1 : 596–97, chap. 141), qui s'approprie ce texte qu'elle réduit à un traité d'astronomie et même d'astrologie :

Encore plus, dist la vieille, Aristote en son livre des Secrez des Secrez conseille au roy Alixandre qu'il ne face riens sans le conseil des saiges astronomiens, en reprevant ceulx qui dient que ma science d'astronomie

¹⁴ Le savoir n'a donc de droit de cité que s'il est subordonné à la recherche du salut.

¹⁵ Steven J. Williams, *The Secret of Secrets: The Scholarly Career of a Pseudo-Aristotelian Text in the Latin Middle Ages* (University of Michigan Press, 2003).

est inutile ou si forte que humain engin ne la puet comprendre (1: 603, chap. 141).

La version latine la plus diffusée du *Secret des Secrets*, celle de Philippe de Tripoli, contient effectivement un chapitre où Aristote enjoint au roi de toujours prendre le conseil d'un astrologue¹⁶. Or on sait avec quelle virulence Philippe de Mézières condamne l'astrologie et interdit plus loin la lecture des ouvrages de sciences occultes à Charles VI, car, dit-il, ils nuisent «a l'ame et au bon gouvernement de 'sa' royalle magesté» (2: 223, chap. 229).

Dans le débat qui l'oppose à Superstition, l'allégorie Bonne Foi, «chambrière de l'Université de Paris», ne revient pas précisément sur ce traité (1: 604–20, chap. 147–60). Si Philippe de Mézières s'inspire de près du *Livre de Divinations* de Nicole Oresme, il ne lui reprend pas sa prise de parti contre l'attribution du *Secret des Secrets* à Aristote¹⁷. Pour réfuter ce que dit la Vieille, Bonne Foi distingue néanmoins clairement l'astronomie de l'astrologie et affirme la condamnation de la seconde par les docteurs de l'Église et par Aristote (1: 604–16, chap. 147–58). Elle confirme ensuite une autre des allégations de Superstition qui concerne Alexandre, quand elle inclut Nectanébus à sa liste des souverains victimes de leur croyance dans les pouvoirs de l'astrologie (1: 616–19, chap. 159). Selon ses dires et conformément aux dérivés latins du Pseudo-Callisthène, Nectanébus serait le père d'Alexandre et lui aurait transmis son savoir, avant que ce dernier ne le renie et ne le tue:

Que advint il au roy Neptanabus, roy d'Egypte, souverain es ars magiques et en astronomie, maistre de ladicte vieille, lequel fu chassié hors de son royaume et vint comme ung pauvre en Macedoine et par ses enchantemens deceut la royne Olimpias en laquelle il engendra le roy Alixandre. Dont il advint qu'il vult a Alixandre, qui ne savoit pas qu'il

¹⁶ *Secretum secretorum cum glossis et notulis* (version commentée par Roger Bacon), éd. Robert Steele (Oxford, 1920), t. V, ch. 22, *De regimine vite per astronomiam*, 60–62.

¹⁷ Sylvie Lefèvre, *Rhétorique et divinations chez Nicole Oresme (1322–1382): étude et édition du Livre de Divinations*, thèse dactylographiée de l'Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, 1993, § 166 et 167, 54: «Je vien après a ce que dit Aristotes a Alixandre ou livre des Secrés. Je dy que par aventure Aristotes n'en dit rien ne il n'avoit pas telle maniere de parler comme il a en ce livre qui n'est pas de grant autorité et que Aristote ne fist pas. Item, celle parole doit estre entendue que Alexandre se devoit gouverner avec le conseil d'astronomiens quant au regimen de son corps secon medicine et ainssi le dit Galien et les acteurs de medicine, mais non pas quant au gouvernement du bien publique.»

fust son pere, enseigner sa science. Mais Alixandre le bouta jus en une parfonde fosse. Or ainsi fu mors villainement a tout son astrologie. Lors dist Alixandre a Neptanabus, qui n'est pas encores mors, gisant en la fosse: « Tu qui gis en la fosse, regarde les estoilles se elles te pourront sauver » (1: 617, chap. 159)¹⁸.

En lui s'incarne la figure sacrilège du savant qui croit que l'homme peut agir sur l'avenir et se substituer à Dieu, et qui ne peut qu'entraîner ses disciples dans la voie d'Orgueil, de Vaine Gloire et de Luxure, celle qu'il emprunte lui-même aussi lorsqu'il séduit Olympias. Cette légende, qui contrevient bien sûr aux témoignages très diffusés de Justin et d'Orose, ainsi qu'à celui du *Livre des Maccabées*, qu'Alexandre de Paris et Gautier de Châtillon ont déjà écartée au XII^e siècle, suscite au XIV^e siècle les doutes de Simon de Hesdin dans sa traduction glosée de Valère-Maxime:

Il est voir que il y a un livre de l'ystoire Alexandre, ouquel est dit que Alexandre fu filz de Nectanabus qui avoit esté roy d'Egypte, mais, pource que l'ystoire n'est pas samblable de voir et aussi que je ne treuve ce en nul autentique historiographe, je n'en fay autre mention, car ce que j'ay ici dit met Justin, qui fu abreviateur de Trogue Pompee, en la fin de son IX^e livre aussi comme de mot a mot¹⁹.

Si Philippe de Mézières choisit au contraire de l'authentifier, c'est sans doute qu'elle lui permet d'attirer et compromettre Alexandre du côté des sciences occultes interdites par l'Église, en dépit de l'évocation du meurtre de l'astrologue. Cette scène frappe au reste par sa signification ambivalente: Alexandre punit consciemment le péché d'orgueil de son père, mais au prix d'un parricide. En outre l'évocation du *Secret des Secrets*, qu'il attribue toujours à Aristote, suggère le maintien de sa croyance aux vertus de l'astrologie pour l'exercice du pouvoir, comme si Aristote prenait malgré tout le relais de Nectanébus.

C'est peu après ses conseils sur l'instruction des rois que Vérité introduit son réquisitoire sans appel contre le Macédonien, qu'elle stigmatise comme un tyran (2: 239–41, chap. 234). Or l'un des leitmotivs des miroirs du prince, c'est que le tyran n'a pas reçu d'éducation savante et que la science est justement un rempart contre le despotisme. Dans

¹⁸ Nicole Oresme, *Traité de Divinations*, § 68, 20–21.

¹⁹ BnF, ms. fr. 9749, fol. 70 verso; Simon de Hesdin et Nicolas de Gonesse, *Les Faits et les Paroles mémorables*, traduction de Valère-Maxime, ms. BnF fr. 9749; livre I, éd. Maria Cristina Enriello, livre II, éd. Chiara Di Nunzio, édition disponible sur le site: www.pluteus.it

le *Songe du Vergier*, lorsqu'il définit les critères qui permettent de distinguer le tyran du roi, le clerc insiste sur la haine que le tyran voue au savoir et à ses représentants, qu'il n'a de cesse de détruire²⁰. Mais ces miroirs du prince ne présentent pas Alexandre comme un despote, alors même que le *Policratique* et le *Songe du Vergier* développent une longue réflexion sur la tyrannie. Pour Philippe de Mézières, le tyran qu'il est au contraire ne saurait être savant, il ne peut disposer au plus et pour le pire que du faux savoir d'astrologie, qui renforce ses vices. Rappelons ainsi les trois péchés qu'il lui prête et détaille ensuite, en leur ajoutant la tâche que constituerait son origine bâtarde (2: 240, chap. 234):

Tu doys savoir, Beau Filz, que le roy Alixandre, en briefves parolles, selon les ystoires fu bastars, et un des plus grans tyrans qui ayt esté en ce monde et auquel troys grans vices regnerent publiquement, qui sont destestables et doivent estre a tout roy naturel et a tout vaillant chevalier, c'est assavoir de extreme tyrannie et vaine gloire au quart degré; la seconde si fu une extreme et horrible cruaulté, et la tierce si fu luxure publique et desmesuree, sicomme il appert clerement par les livres de ses conquestes et de sa vie (2: 239–40, chap. 234).

À Avignon, la vieille qui allégorise Orgueil l'a d'ailleurs déjà compté au nombre des meilleurs ouvriers de sa forge et Luxure à celui de ses « bastars vaillans²¹. »

Menée pour son seul profit personnel, son éphémère conquête de l'Orient révèle un impérialisme aveugle et destructeur que rien ne légitime (2: 240, chap. 234) et que Philippe de Mézières oppose aux conquêtes romaines, justes et durables²². Le châtiment divin de sa demesure est d'ailleurs sa mort précoce. Selon cette analyse, Alexandre ne peut donc pas être intégré à la propagande en faveur de la croisade, alors qu'il avait été réinventé en précurseur des Croisés dans le *Roman*

²⁰ Livre I, chap. CXXXI, §16–17, 220: « Secondement, un tyran destruit les sages de la cyté, afin que ilz ne cognessent sa tyrannie et que ilz ne emeuvent le pueple contre luy; c'est fait et euvre de tyran. Tiercement, un tyran destruit lez etudes et prent en despit les sages, car, pour ce que comunement aucun devienent sages par estude, ilz lez redoubte et craint afin que ilz ne reprennent sez mauvetiez. »

²¹ Coopland, *Songe*, 1: 324, chap. 49: « Après par le roy Alixandre a ma forge tout le monde je submis; » et *ibid.*, 1: 337, chap. 52 « Quant royaumes et empires, dist la vieille, par mes bastars vaillans ont esté gouverné: Grece par Alixandre et l'Orient conquesté [...] »

²² Par ailleurs, il a glorifié Caton, qui a selon lui réformé l'Orient en déposant tous les despotes, en le pacifiant pour le bonheur des « humbles et des loyaulx » et sans en retirer pour lui-même le moindre avantage matériel (1: 522–24, chap. 108).

d'*Alexandre* du XII^e siècle et qu'il le sera encore par Vasque de Lucène au XV^e siècle²³. Il n'est pas davantage envisageable de lui attribuer une initiation à une sagesse et même une foi pré-chrétiennes, en dépit de la grande diffusion des récits de sa visite à Jérusalem et de son enfermement de Gog et Magog ou des tribus juives impies²⁴. Peut-être le rejet des *Vœux du Paon* montre-t-il alors aussi un refus de l'intégrer à la liste des Neuf Preux dont Jacques de Longuyon a donné la première attestation, car à ses yeux il ne peut être comparé aux rois ou guerriers exemplaires de l'Antiquité biblique et du monde chrétien²⁵.

La violence du portrait à charge correspond bien au discours d'un prédicateur, mais elle peut malgré tout surprendre, après les allusions neutres au Macédonien du livre I et celles, détournées sur Nectanébus, du livre II. Au début du récit des tribulations d'Ardent Désir et des trois dames en Orient, Alexandre est en effet déjà apparu à travers deux réminiscences, d'abord du célèbre épisode de sa rencontre avec les Brahmanes :

Alixandre, quand il conquist les contrees d'Ynde, il fu enformé de ceste gent si vertueuse, le quel Alixandre y ala, non pas l'espee ou poing, mais pour les visiter et avoir leur amitié. Il se merveilla fort de leur merueilleuse vie. Mais en la fin, pour ce qu'ilz hayoient honneur mondain et richesses et n'avoient point de tresor, de eulz ne fist compte, ne ilz ne firent de lui, ne en riens ne le creinoient (1 : 224–25, chap. 10).

puis de la scène, moins connue, d'un procès entre deux plaignants qui refusaient chacun la possession d'un trésor : « ceste ystoire je treuve ou livre d'Alixandre » (1 : 225–226, chap. 10). Dans ces deux séquences,

²³ Alexandre de Paris, *Le Roman d'Alexandre, The Medieval French Roman d'Alexandre*, vol. II, *Version of Alexandre de Paris, Text*, éd. E. C. Armstrong, D. L. Buffum, B. Edwards, L. F. H. Lowe (Princeton, 1937) ; trad. française partielle Laurence Harf-Lancner (Paris, 1994) ; Vasque de Lucène, *Les Faits et Gestes d'Alexandre le Grand*, ms. fr. BnF 22547 ; trad. française partielle Olivier Collet, *Splendeurs de la cour de Bourgogne. Récits et chroniques*, dir. Danielle Régnier-Bohler (Paris, 1995), 565–627.

²⁴ À partir de l'*Historia scholastica* de Pierre le Mangeur, on en trouve le récit en français dans les histoires universelles, depuis l'*Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César* jusqu'au *Miroir historial* de Jean de Vignay. Voir *L'historiographie médiévale d'Alexandre*, dir. Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas (Turnhout, 2011).

²⁵ Quand il donne une liste de modèles de guerriers, qui ne correspond certes qu'en partie à celle des Neuf Preux, c'est alors pour montrer l'infériorité d'Alexandre : « tu pues assez cognoistre par ce que dit est que la vaillance des dessusdiz Charlemaine, David et Josué, Judas Machabeus, Godeffroy de Buillon et Cypion Auffrican, en vaillance esprouvee vault trop mieulx assez que celle d'Alixandre » (2 : 240–41). Sur les Neuf Preux, voir Horst Schroeder, *Der Topos der Nine Worthies in Literatur und bildender Kunst* (Göttingen, 1971) ; Jean Favier (dir.), *Un Rêve de chevalerie, les Neuf Preux* (Paris et Langeais, 2003).

Alexandre découvre des exemples de sagesse orientale qui lui montrent le mépris des richesses et même l'adoration d'un dieu unique. Dans les textes antérieurs, ces séquences tournaient le plus souvent à son dés-honneur, fustigé qu'il était pour sa cupidité et son matérialisme. C'est très net dans la *Collatio Alexandri et Dindimi*, lors de la confrontation avec Dindimus, le roi des Brahmanes, et aussi dans la *Prise de Defur*, où Alexandre se moque des plaideurs désintéressés avant de se détourner, par peur et pour sa honte, du fleuve Sapience dont l'eau rend fous les hommes cupides et les traîtres²⁶. Pour cet épisode du pot d'or, Philippe de Mézières se réfère à un livre, le *Livre d'Alixandre*²⁷. Or, si l'on excepte le *Liber philosophorum moralium antiquorum*, traduction du *Bocados de Oro*, elle-même traduite en français, sans doute quelques années après l'écriture du *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, par Guillaume de Tignonville dans le *Livre des dits moraux des philosophes*, l'épisode apparaît en français dans la *Prise de Defur*, qui au XIII^e siècle a été greffée sur la branche III du *Roman d'Alexandre* d'Alexandre de Paris²⁸. Vu la grande diffusion des manuscrits cycliques de ce dernier, Philippe de Mézières, lui qui pourtant s'attaque ailleurs aux récits rimés en français, pourrait peut-être s'inspirer d'un tel texte romanesque. Quoi qu'il en soit, ces deux allusions à Alexandre du livre I tournent très vite court et le roi antique est étrangement épargné, à la faveur tant de l'indifférence qui lui est attribuée devant les Brahmanes que de celle de l'auteur à son égard. Philippe de Mézières n'évoque pas le discours de Dindimus, puis il occulte la réaction du Macédonien face aux plaignants et le rend étranger à une scène dont il prend pourtant le soin de dire qu'elle provient d'un *Livre d'Alexandre*. Rien n'anticipe donc sa condamnation du roi, comme une lecture rétrospective,

²⁶ *La Prise de Defur et le Voyage d'Alexandre au Paradis terrestre*, éd. L. P. G. Pechkham et M. S. La Du (Princeton et Paris, 1935); *Die Collatio Alexandri et Dindimi*, éd. et trad. allemande Marc Steinmann (Göttingen, 2000). Sur la confrontation avec les Brahmanes et l'épisode des plaignants, Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, «Alexandre et les Brahmanes dans les *Romans d'Alexandre* français du XII^e au XV^e siècle», *Le Moyen Âge* CVI (2000), 467-93, et *Les Romans d'Alexandre*, 478-84.

²⁷ Pierre-Yves Badel, «Alexandre dans le *Roman de la Rose* et le *Songe du Vieil Pelerin*», *Romania* 121 (2003), 415-29.

²⁸ *La Prise de Defur*, laisse 53, v. 1435-1459; Guillaume de Tignonville, *Les Dits moraux des philosophes*, éd. Robert Eder, «Tignonvillana inedita», *Romanische Forschungen* 33 (1915), 851-1022, 985-986 pour la séquence; *Liber philosophorum moralium antiquorum*, éd. Ezio Franceschini, «Il liber philosophorum moralium antiquorum, testo critico», *Atti del reale istituto veneto* 91 (1931-1932), 393-597, 521-22 pour la séquence.

à la lumière du livre III, aurait pu le donner à penser. Rien ne met Alexandre en perspective avec la dénonciation de la mauvaise alchimie que les dames découvrent. Ces réminiscences ne sont que les vestiges d'un passé mort, d'une figure historique qui ne suscite alors ni enthousiasme ni réprobation, qui a perdu toute force agissante.

Si le réquisitoire du livre III est ensuite si violent, c'est parce qu'il s'intègre à une satire de la cour et des courtisans, à une dénonciation de leur *adulatio* perverse²⁹. Philippe de Mézières y exprime sa colère contre les flatteurs qui séduisent les souverains en les comparant au Macédonien pour obtenir leurs faveurs et leur argent. La démystification du roi antique dans une perspective qui évoque celle d'Orose, même si Vérité n'a pas besoin d'autorité pour légitimer son discours, conforte bien entendu la dénonciation de leurs contre-vérités, qui correspondent à la troisième catégorie de mensonges que Philippe de Mézières définit ailleurs : les mensonges pour le déshonneur de Dieu et le préjudice de son prochain³⁰.

Qui sont alors plus précisément les cibles de l'attaque ? D'après les chapitres sur la flatterie, puis sur la largesse royale (2 : 235-44, chap. 233 et 234), ce sont d'abord les chevaliers qui exploitent la vanité des rois, ainsi que les conseillers cupides, les « mahommez. » Ils n'hésitent pas à égaler les rois à Alexandre, dont ils exagèrent les qualités et taisent les vices, d'où la nécessité de rectifier leurs erreurs volontaires :

Beau Filz, dist la royne, se tu voudras croire les chevaliers qui ont acostume de bien plumer le roy et les seigneurs et par leur soutilte pratique, sus forme de vaillance remplie de flaterie, te feront preux et vaillant et large comme Alexandre [...]. Les dessusdz chevaliers, ravissables comme aultouers ou laniers, a cas civil te remembreront souvent Alixandre et non pas le vaillant Charlemaine, David ou Josue, desquelx on ne list point folle largesse ou prodigalité. Beau Filz, dist la royne, les dessusdz chevaliers, ayans les cuers d'oyseau de proye, te reciteront tant seulement ta vaillance, voire pour venir a la largesse du roy Alexandre, mais

²⁹ Il emploie le mot *adulacion*, 2 : 235, chap. 233.

³⁰ « Les docteurs dient qu'il est troys manieres de mençonges, c'est assavoir mençonge d'esbatement, quant elle est dicte pour conforter son presme ou pour passer temps on recite aucune figure ou parabole, qui n'est pas vraye, pour edifier les oyans. Et ce se puet dire sans pechié. La seconde mençonge est appellee d'office, quant le juge pour cognoistre la verité met sus au prisonnier qu'il a occis un homme, et par adventure il ne sera pas verité. Et toutesfoiz, pour son office il ne peche pas. La tierce mençonge si est appellee pernicieuse, c'est assavoir mauvais, quant on ment a escient a deshonneur de Dieu et dommage du presme » (2 : 178, chap. 215).

ilz se garderont bien de reciter les autres condicions et vices publiques, par lesquelx sa vaillance ne devroit pas estre si louee ne sa largesse tant recitee (2: 239, chap. 234).

La remise en cause de la vertu la plus souvent attribuée à Alexandre au Moyen Âge, la largesse, dénonce l'idéologie aristocratique qui, dans le *Roman d'Alexandre* et les *Vœux du Paon*, mais aussi les romans arthuriens, vante un système de dons et de contre-dons entre le roi et ses chevaliers³¹. Elle conforte aussi les nombreux appels de Philippe de Mézières à la limitation des dépenses royales. Le discours de Vérité sur la prodigalité glisse ensuite des chevaliers aux « chevaliers dessusdiz et heraulx » (2: 240, chap. 234), puis aux « hesraulx et [...] menestriers et [...] faiseurs de bourdes » (2: 242, chap. 234), si bien que l'on revient au procès de la littérature de fiction déjà instruit dans le chapitre sur les lectures royales, celui des « ystoires aprocrifes et douteuses », des « livres et de romans qui sont rempliz de bourdes et qui attrayent le lysant souvent a impossibilité, a folie, vanité et pechié, comme les livres des bourdes de Lancelot et semblables, comme les bourdes des *Veuz du Paon* » (2: 221, chap. 229)³². On le sait, Philippe de Mézières plaide pour une censure de toute la littérature qui ne serait pas édifiante et même pour une expulsion du royaume des « heraulx et controveurs de bourdes, qui sont condempnez en la loy divine par ta mere sainte eglise », « en la sainte escripture reprouvez » (2: 243–44, chap. 234). La diatribe—la vitupération—débouche aussi sur la critique de deux œuvres, le *Roman de Lancelot en prose* et le texte plus récent de Jacques de Longuyon, les *Vœux du Paon*, qui, avec ses continuations, offre en effet les plus audacieuses libertés que les auteurs de fiction s'accordent au XIV^e siècle sur Alexandre.

Ceux qui, contre Vérité, commettent ce péché de langue qu'est l'*adulatio* en identifiant leur prince à Alexandre trahissent donc la vérité historique et entraînent leurs auditeurs vers la damnation³³. Fabricants d'une monnaie de mauvais aloi, faux-monnayeurs, ils donnent un exemple d'alchimie maléfique, de transmutation illusoire et périlleuse

³¹ Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, *Les Romans d'Alexandre. Aux frontières de la chanson de geste et du roman* (Paris, 1995), 308–30.

³² Des attaques violentes contre les jongleurs et les auteurs de livres profanes, réprouvés pour leur habileté de flatteurs, avaient déjà été lancées dans le *Policraticus* et sa traduction française par Denis Foulechat.

³³ Sur ce « péché de langue », voir Carla Casagrande et Silvana Vecchio, *Les Péchés de la langue* (Paris, 2007), 253–63.

pour les consciences: plutôt que de fructifier, dans le respect de la mission divine qu'énonce la parabole des talents, si souvent évoquée par les auteurs médiévaux avant d'être réorchestrée par Philippe de Mézières, leur savoir se pervertit en leurre et simulacres et corrompt ceux qui le reçoivent. Assimilables par leurs effets au chant des Sirènes ou au vent de Chypre, leurs récits sur Alexandre constitueraient ainsi l'exact contrepoint du livre de Vérité que Dame Précieuse imprime directement dans le cœur du roi³⁴. Cette critique sert bien sûr aussi la promotion de l'œuvre du très sage conseiller de Charles VI, qui, loin de tout mensonge, en dépit d'un montage allégorique très littéraire, transmettrait la parole divine.

Plus loin dans le livre III du *Songe*, alors que le ton du procureur n'est plus de mise, Vérité, dans son discours sur les stratégies et techniques de guerre, après avoir proposé à l'imitation Judas Maccabée, Godefroy de Bouillon et David, suggère néanmoins une nouvelle liste de lectures au roi. En tête des «livres auctentiques», le lecteur s'étonne alors de voir les «histoires des IX preux, des batailles des roys, d'Alixandre³⁵.» Est-ce une réhabilitation des *Vœux du Paon*? Certes non, mais c'est la reconnaissance implicite d'une exemplarité d'Alexandre guerrier et stratège, jugé alors digne de sa présence dans la liste des Neuf Preux. Enfin, et c'est plus troublant, tout à la fin du *Songe*, Sapience insère Alexandre à la fois dans sa première liste des grands seigneurs punis et damnés pour leurs vices et dans sa deuxième liste des exemples que le roi français doit imiter pour la grandeur de leurs entreprises, mais la contradiction n'est en rien explicitée³⁶.

³⁴ Le vent de Chypre signifie pour Philippe de Mézières la vaine gloire. Sur l'évocation de l'histoire de Chypre dans le *Songe*, Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, «Images littéraires de Chypre et évolution de l'esprit de croisade au XIV^e siècle», *Progrès, réaction, décadence dans l'Occident médiéval*, dir. Emmanuèle Baumgartner et Laurence Harf-Lancner (Genève, 2003), 123–35.

³⁵ Et pour abregier le dit point et pour ce aussi que la forme de la guerre et des batailles des personnes, generalement des roys, par les vaillans clerks et philosophes moraulx a esté plainement descripte es livres auctentiques, sicomme es histoires des IX preux, des batailles des roys, d'Alixandre, et des Rommains, ou livre de Titus Livius, Valerius Maximus, Vegecius de la chose chevalereuse, ou livre du gouvernement des princes et de plusieurs autres, dist la royne, a present pour cause de brevété je m'en passeray a tant [...] (2: 380–81, chap. 271).

³⁶ «Lorsque recite la royne Sapience au jeune Moyse en groz, par maniere d'exemples, les mauvaitiez et les vices des puissans seigneurs de ce monde qui se sont delictez en la gloire du monde depuis Cayin jusques a l'advenement de Jesucrist, et comment, selon la sainte escripture, ilz sont dampnez», après «la cruaulté de Cayin, la grandeur et puissance des Jayans » et une longue liste, elle mentionne «la promociion de

La figure d'Alexandre s'inscrit ainsi au croisement de plusieurs grandes lignes du discours de Philippe de Mézières : la pensée sur le pouvoir royal, la condamnation de l'astrologie et la critique de la flatterie, qui parcourt *Le songe du vieil pelerin* telle une obsession et qui interfère avec la réflexion sur le bienfait que doit apporter un livre, entre douceur et amertume³⁷. Philippe de Mézières condamne à travers Alexandre ceux qui exploitent l'Histoire à des fins personnelles, la mettent en fiction et séduisent les rois par des identifications flatteuses. Lui-même néanmoins, d'un livre à l'autre du *Songe* et en fonction des nécessités de son argumentaire, exploite librement différentes facettes du portrait d'Alexandre, sans relier ses rappels et ses jugements par un fil conducteur, sans effacer les décalages plus ou moins sensibles entre eux, sans porter non plus de regard critique sur ce que d'autres ont identifié comme des fictions, par exemple la filiation avec Nectanébus ou l'attribution du *Secret des Secrets* à Aristote. Que Philippe de Mézières instrumentalise donc à son tour, mais autrement, la figure d'Alexandre, le jeu qu'il établit dans le *Songe* entre plusieurs images du conquérant macédonien en donne ainsi un indice supplémentaire. Par ailleurs, s'il ne cesse lui aussi de recourir à la *laudatio* en assimilant Charles VI à un nouveau Moïse et si le lecteur peut être troublé par la ressemblance du procédé avec ce qu'il reproche aux auteurs sur Alexandre, la grandeur du modèle choisi, Moïse, autant que la finalité de l'analogie, conforter le roi français dans la recherche du Salut pour lui, pour son peuple et pour la chrétienté, sont là pour éviter toute confusion et écarter le soupçon de flatterie.

Philippe de Macedonne, la hardiesse d'Alixandre [...], les bourdes de Neptanabus» (2: 471-72). Puis lorsqu'elle lui démontre «par l'exemple des vaillans de ce monde quelz les conseilliers royaulx doyvent estre et quel le jeune Moyse doyt estre quant a son gouvernement et a sa magesté royalle», elle affirme : «et pour ce par ma doctrine en parolles veritables, parlant par figure, tu seras Altilius, en patience Marcellus, es grans emprinses Alexandre de Macedonne [...]» (2: 474-75, chap. 304).

³⁷ Les images de la flatterie qui reviennent le plus souvent sont le chant des sirènes, le vent de Chypre qui enfle de Vaine Gloire, la chienne grivelée, qui suit l'allégorie Orgueil, l'aînée des vieilles.

A RELIGION IN ITS TIME: NUMEROLOGY AND MORAL ALCHEMY IN PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES' WORK

Joël Blanchard

In his cell at the Celestines' monastery, the Vieil Pélerin [The Old Pilgrim], also known as Ardant Désir [Burning Desire], has a dream. A lady of light, Divine Providence, attended by her ladies-in-waiting, appears to him to announce to him nothing less than the necessary reform of Christianity and of the kingdom of France. The wall that men have erected through their sins between themselves and God must be brought down. The biblical parable of the talents urges that those men who have the ability, and first among them the Vieil Pélerin, make the most of these talents on behalf of the renaissance of the kingdom of God and in the service of the kingdom of France. Thus will one be able to help France's new sovereign, the "blanc faucon aux bec et aux pattes dorés" [the golden-billed and golden-legged white falcon], Charles VI, in his mission. Yet, prior to everything, an inquiry has to be carried out and an inventory made in every part of the Christian world, so the necessary remedies could be determined. Only then will the "belle monnoie de la sainte archemie" [the beautiful coinage of holy alchemy], moral alchemy being meant here, be able to circulate in the whole world and the philosopher's stone be discovered.¹

Le songe du vieil pelerin is as much an initiatory tale as a work dealing with politics (and political morality), history and geography, which plunges us right into the tragic end of the Middle Ages. We intend to organize our analysis around two themes, numerology and moral alchemy, which are very closely connected. The stronger emphasis will be on alchemy, which has hitherto been little studied with regard to the *Songe*. As far as numerology is concerned, we took a close look

¹ George William Coopland's two-volume edition of the *Songe*, faulty as it is, unfortunately is still the only one available (Cambridge, 1969) [henceforth Coopland]; see 1: 95, prologue. We are preparing a critical edition of the *Songe* to be published by Droz (*Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance*), Geneva.

at this topic in a recent article dedicated to hierarchies in Mézières's works. Here then are just a few thoughts about numerology.²

In this field, Philippe de Mézières is resorting in an unexpected manner to Pseudo-Dionysius: he introduces alterations in the Areopagite's grid.³ In Pseudo-Dionysius, let us briefly recall, there are three triple hierarchies: Seraphims, Cherubims, Thrones / Dominions, Virtues, Powers / Principalities, Archangels, Angels. In Mézières, there is a shift from three to four, and this change is deliberate. Even though the "quatre hiérarchies des trois estatz" [four hierarchies of the three estates] expression, preserves the ternary model in the *Songe*, the presence of the number four raises questions.⁴ It is one of the enigmas, among many others, that we tried to solve in our article. Several explanations can account for this dissymmetry.

Let us consider the many influences that converge on Philippe de Mézières, first of all the Victorine influence at the end of the Middle Ages. Can the beginning of this relation be dated back to his quick stay at the University of Paris between 1349 and 1354? There, Philippe de Mézières developed his first contacts with theologians, with Nicolas Oresme in particular. Did he return there, much later, after 1370, as an eternal student, richer now because of the lessons learnt in an adventurous life? Let us recall that in Hugh of Saint Victor's *Didascalion* the number four refers to the arithmetic conception of the *quaternarium animae*; the same author associates the *quaternarium* with the four parts of philosophy: the "theoretical" sciences, or the contemplation of truth; the "practical" sciences, or the regulation of morals; the "mechanical" sciences, *i.e.* those that take care of the occupations of everyday life; and finally the "logical" sciences, which provide the necessary knowledge to speak correctly, and, in this manner, the "elders use this figure in their oaths."⁵ Jean Gerson, a contemporary of Mézières's, proposes a fourfold classification: the four kingdoms, the four climates, that is, the four parts of the world, and the four rivers of Heaven. The four

² Joël Blanchard, "Les hiérarchies de l'honneur. Avatars d'une grille conceptuelle à la fin du Moyen-Âge: Mézières et le Pseudo-Denys," *Revue historique*, CCCX/4 (2008), 789–817.

³ On how Pseudo-Dionysius was received in the Middle-Ages see François Bougard, Dominique Iogna-Prat, Régine Le Jan, eds., *Hiérarchie et stratification sociale dans l'Occident médiéval (400–1100)* (Turnhout, 2008), *passim*.

⁴ Coopland, 1: 447, chap. 83.

⁵ *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor, A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, trans. by Jerome Taylor (New York and London, 1968), 65.

kingdoms are the kingdom of Heaven, above the prince (*supra te*); the kingdom of the Church, meaning the kingdom of the militant Church, "God's dwelling place and door to Heaven" (*domus Dei et porta celi*), within which the prince is to reside (*circa te*); the internal kingdom (*regnum personale, intra te*), the arena of moral conscience where vices and virtues fight; and finally, ruled by the prince (*sub te*) the temporal kingdom, which is nothing else than the "famous kingdom of France whose direction he will inherit through hereditary succession."⁶ "He" is the Dauphin, who, as a faithful subject of the Church, draws from this obedience his legitimacy as a prince and his capacity to carry out his fourfold mission.

Is the number four to be put in relation with the four nations of the university? Mézières himself, in the third version of the *Ordre de la Passion du Christ* (1396), mentions, in the microcosm that constitutes the order, the four estates: "l'estat de l'église; l'estat de chevalerie; l'estat des nobles non chevaliers et de bourgeoisie; l'estat des gens de mestier et des laboureurs" [the estate of the church; the estate of chivalry; the estate of non-knighted nobility and burghers; the estate of craftsmen and laborers].⁷ The number four is thus the living image of the unity

⁶ *Tractatus [de consideratione quam debet habere princeps]* 1408–1410, edited in Jacques Verger, "Ad prefulgidum sapientie culmen prolem regis inclitam provehere. L'initiation des dauphins de France à la sagesse politique selon Jean Gerson," *Penser le pouvoir au Moyen Âge (VIII^e–XV^e siècle)*, *Etudes d'histoire et de littérature offertes à Françoise Autrand*, edited by Dominique Boutet and Jacques Verger (Paris, 2000), 427–40.

⁷ The passage on the quaternity is not to be found in the incomplete version of ms. Ashmole MS 813 (cf. A. Hamid Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion (Transcription of the Ashmole MS 813)," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts*, 18 (1964), 43–104. The quote here is from the Arsenal text, ms. 2251, f. 74v–75r: "A tous clerement peut apparoir comment en touz degréz et estas des crestiens est trouvé l'ingratitu[de] dessus couchié et infinitis males taches que d'elle s'ensuivent. Et pour ce de touz estas et singulier degré des crestiens seront pris hommes desquelz sera fet, et de la reparacion de touz les crestiens en la vie attive et contemplative, c'est assavoir l'estat de clergie, l'estat de chevalerie, l'estat des nobles non chevaliers et de bourgeoisie et l'estat de gens de mestier et des laboureurs, a composer le miroir dessusdit, c'est assavoir la sainte chevalerie de la passion de Jhesucrist pour la renovacion et commemoration nouvelle de la passion Nostre Seigneur, pour la delivrance de la Terre Sainte et multiplication de nostre foy catholique; de l'estat de l'église seront prins certains prestres ou chanoines et personnes d'église qui en la presence du prince des chevaliers, des freres et des sergens devotement feront l'office divin et de jour et de nuyt, par le commandement de nostre Saint Pere le pape et par sa beneisson; de l'estat aussi de chevalerie sera prins un prince seul et chevaliers militans; de l'estat des escuiers et bourgeoisie sera prins certain nombre de freres; de l'estat aussi des gens de mestier et des laboureurs sera prins certain nombre de sergens; de ces quatre ordres de crestiens la Passion Nostre Seigneur moyene et agrouant les cuers humains de nostre sainte

of the social body. In the *Songe* itself, there are many references to the number four: the four wheels of the allegorical chariot, the four corners of the chessboard, the four sides of Bonaventure's rule, the tetragram or Jehovah's name. With the Spirituals or the Franciscans, with whom Philippe de Mézières was in contact throughout his long life, these developments concerning the number four are not unusual. It was a common development in Franciscan preaching. Thomas Aquinas speaks of Christ's four-fold suffering: the wounds caused by the crown of thorns, the driving of the nails, the spitting and his flagellation. Jacopo de Voragine's *Golden Legend* (*Legenda aurea*) reports that, in the course of his Passion, Christ was submitted four times to men's contempt: at Anne's house, in front of Herod, by Pilatus, and on the Cross.⁸ The likelihood exists also that Mézières may have had access to other treatises like Pseudo-Villeneuve's, whose *Tractatus* mentions the four types of passions.⁹

The sources of quaternity are numerous but its pragmatic use within the *Songe* remains unique. The extra hierarchy that is being introduced, which is a duplication of the *studium* or an addition to it, concerns the law personnel, the jurists, those who are in charge of social regulation. It is inserted between the second hierarchy—that of the aristocracy, and the third, that of the people—and serves to cement them together. It results from the growing role of the judicial institution. It is well known that Mézières targets particularly this body in the planned reform of the judicial and royal institutions. He would have

congregacion sera nostre sainte chevalerie faite et edifiee, en laquelle tous crestiens comme en un miroir cler et luisant contempleront la glorieuse passion de Nostre Seigneur et es cuers le recorderont comme fresche et nouvelle et devotement remercieront a Dieu en desirant la delivrance de Jerusalem la sainte cité et l'augmentation de nostre foy catholique, en amandant leur vie de mieulx en mieulx, en offrant a Dieu arres honnorables de vraie honneur et du salut des ames..." The corresponding Latin words are, in the first redaction *Nova Religio Milicie Passionis Ihesu Cristi pro acquisitione Sancte Civitatis Jherusalem et Terre Sancte* (1384), Bibliothèque Mazarine, ms. n° 1943, f.52v: *status sacerdotalis, status militaris, status civilis et status laboratorum* (including *omnis status rusticalis et manu operantis*).

⁸ Ed. Alain Boureau, (Paris, 2004), chap. 51, 273–74, quoted by Antoine Calvet.

⁹ Antoine Calvet, *Les œuvres alchimiques attribuées à Arnaud de Villeneuve: Médecine, grand œuvre et prophétie au Moyen-Âge*, Paris-Milan, SÉHA-Archè, 2011; idem, "Les traductions françaises et occitanes de l'œuvre alchimique du pseudo-Arnaud de Villeneuve (XIV^e–XV^e siècle)," in Anna Alberni, Lola Badia, Lluís Cifuentes, Alexander Fidora, eds., *Ciència i societat a la Corona d'Aragó: La vernacularització del saber i la configuració de les identitats lingüístiques europees a l'època Lluï i Eiximenis*, (forthcoming).

liked to see their role diminished, curtailed or simplified. Could it be argued that Mézières might have chosen to create a new hierarchy, even though it meant altering the Dionysian grid, in order to settle the thorny and pressing late medieval issue of the multiplication of legal conflicts, through isolating and pointing at a category so far ignored by the usual tripartite configuration? The third hierarchy, the “extra” hierarchy, is like a shoot growing out of the second: it illustrates the autonomy acquired by the third power, the *studium*. The stigmatization of the judicial world is not unique to Mézières.¹⁰ Criticism of the judiciary had existed throughout the middle ages, from the *Roman de Renart* to the farce of *Maître Pathelin*, through the authors of mirrors of princes starting with Hélinand de Froidmont, and up to Juvenal des Ursins and Christine de Pizan, to name only the closest to Philippe de Mézières. It is thus a leitmotiv: the questioning of litigiousness looms over a society which finds it hard to accept these new actors of social life, and this finds an echo in Mézières. But what interests us above all is not so much this eternal truth as the way it is handled by Mézières and the remarkable relief it acquires when it is seen in light of the Dionysian model of reading and writing. The recuperation and exploitation of the Dionysian reading model thus produces a splendid text on the rise of the *noblesse de robe* at the end of the fourteenth century, a text that has never before been analyzed from this perspective. The *Songe* would accurately echo this rise. The privileged way in which numbers are used would reflect a polemical and instrumentalizing approach, which uses the rhetoric of the time to serve pragmatic and utopian goals.

In a more general way, it might be said that the combination of numbers four and three is conceptualized in a global manner, as a popularized way of thinking about cosmogony, which had become a classic in the milieu of the Spiritual Franciscans. It is not impossible that Philippe de Mézières was steeped in this “ambiente” (of the mystic type for example). This leads, quite naturally to the question of another type of relationship of Mézières’s with the same sphere of influence: moral alchemy. Indeed, the *Songe* is based entirely on the allegory of alchemy. Admittedly, Mézières is not an alchemist and his

¹⁰ The contradiction is only apparent. In the reformation rhetoric, criticism comes before reform. It is a double-pronged process, see Joël Blanchard, “Discours de la réformation et utopie à la fin du Moyen Âge: le *Songe* du Vieil Pèlerin de Philippe de Mézières (1389),” *Studi francesi* 32 (1988), 397–403.

work bears no resemblance whatsoever to an alchemist's text, but it is obvious that he adopted those aspects from alchemical literature that proved useful for his approach. Among the images borrowed from alchemy, the first to come to mind is that of the forge, which serves to try the standard of the "monnoie de la sainte alchimie" [coinage of the holy alchemy]: many more converging and strikingly familiar analogies can be identified.

Alchemy was an accepted pursuit in the culture of the time of Philippe de Mézières.¹¹ Let us also recall that alchemy was not regarded as a crime in the period (contrary to what is being asserted in the nineteenth century). The princes sought out alchemists so that by artifice they could provide them with precious metals. What was considered a legal offense was to cheat, to promise that one could make gold but deliver base metal. The part on alchemy in the *Roman de la Rose* argued that one could produce gold. Charles V's close counselor, Thomas of Bologna, offered elixirs of life to the members of the king's family. For Mézières's readers, then, the references to alchemy were assuredly commonplace. Christine de Pizan, Thomas's daughter, testifies, in the negative, to the importance of alchemy when, in the *Avison*, she underlines its deplorable effects on its adepts.¹²

The encounter with Arsène the Hermit, which opens the *Songe*, constitutes one of the most mysterious passages, in which the connection with alchemy transpires. The episode gives Mézières the opportunity to blend several themes developed in different ways in works of alchemy. The double *topos* of the unending wandering across far-away lands and the successful end of the quest at the side of a master of wisdom is developed to perfection by Mézières. *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, moreover, offers more than that commonplace, evidence that Mézières was thoroughly familiar with the alchemy of his time. The hermit who lived secluded in the desert is, as Mézières points out, Saint Arsène, who lived under Pope Damasus. But Mézières's Arsène is not just a saint. The Arsène of the *Songe* is also a "great alchemist;" in his

¹¹ Cf. Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 8 vols. (New York, 1923–1924), *passim*; Wilhelm Ganzenmüller, *L'alchimie au Moyen Age*, trans. from the German by G. Petit-Dutaillis (Paris, 1940), *passim*; William R. Newman, *Promethean Ambitions. Alchemy and the Quest of Perfect Nature* (Chicago, 2004), *passim*; Barbara Obrist, "Art et nature dans l'alchimie médiévale," *Revue d'histoire des sciences* 49 (1996), 215–86.

¹² *Le livre de l'advison Cristine*, ed. by Liliane Dulac et Christine Reno (Paris, 2001), 82–84.

youth he was an adept of occult sciences, he was “proche prochain et collateral de l’empereur de Rome” [close relative to the Emperor of Rome].¹³ Arsène is no other than the main figure of the *Morenius*, the first Arabic text of alchemy translated into Latin, which was at first a dialogue between Caliph Moawiya and Morenius.¹⁴ Arsène introduces his alchemistical project, to be able to transmute iron (Mars) or tin (Jupiter) into mercury, then mercury into gold. This is one of the major practices of the fourteenth century: to move from reliance on animal (blood for example) or vegetal substances, to the methods transmitted by the Arabs, concentrating specifically on the transmutation of metals. One starts from iron or tin and one seeks to extract from them their “matière première” [primary matter], that is the pure quicksilver (or mercury) inherent to all metals. This done, one can then transform the base matter into gold and even multiply it. This alchemistical theory, known as that of the “mercure seul” [mercury alone] became in the fifteenth century the alpha and the omega of the Great Art accessible only to the elect. That Mézières, in his introduction, conjured up a text of reference for an audience receptive to the tradition of alchemy is only natural. Let us also emphasize that, as is common in Mézières’s use of allegory, behind Arsène there is a hint at arsenic, one of the four major components of alchemy’s Great Work.

To what extent was Philippe de Mézières sufficiently informed to be able to use alchemy as the organizing texture of his narrative? Which texts did he read that directed him towards moral alchemy? A quick detour to the history of alchemy is necessary to explain the unexpected appearance of a moral tradition of alchemy in the *Songe*. For quite a long time, probably since Antiquity, alchemy had been used as a powerful image for moral transmutations, but the ancient texts and authors may not have necessarily been well known in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, under the name of Ramon Llull (1235–1315), a vast corpus of apocryphal alchemy texts was put together in the fourteenth century, that kept expanding down to the seventeenth and even the

¹³ Coopland, 1: 193, chap. 2.

¹⁴ See *A Testament of Alchemy being the revelations of Morienus, ancient adept and hermit of Jerusalem to Khalid ibn Yazid ibn Mu’awiyya, king of the Arabs of the divine secrets of the magisterium and accomplishment of the alchemical art*, ed. and trans. from the oldest manuscripts with commentary by Lee Stavenhagen (Hanover, N.H., 1974).

eighteenth centuries.¹⁵ Lull himself expressed contempt for alchemy very early in his career; his attitude seems to have grown harder as time went on. But in the wake of his outstanding success as a philosopher, anonymous followers began writing under his name and produced a growing number of alchemical texts, the first of which, undoubtedly, and one of the most famous, was the *Testamentum*. Originally written in Latin, this text, dated to 1332, did not intend to limit its scope merely to the project of metal transmutation. It added to it the production of precious stones, and above all the healing of diseases, through the use of an element that assumed a central importance in alchemical theory, the “elixir.” The idea was borrowed from classical Arab texts on alchemy. This opening towards medical alchemy will be seen again in the middle of the fourteenth century, more specifically c. 1351–1352, in the work of the visionary Franciscan mystic Johannes de Rupescissa (Jean de Roquetaillade), who marked profoundly and lastingly this current by his addition of a notion that was to know a prodigious fate: that of the “quintessence.” It is in this treatise that one may trace the roots of another major fourteenth-century text of the pseudo-Llullian movement, the *De secretis naturae seu de quinta essentia*, which is nothing else than a “Lullified” version of Johannes de Rupescissa’s *De consideratione quintae essentiae*.¹⁶

It would appear strange that such an influential concept as “quintessence” does not appear in the *Songe*. However, Mézières refers to the presence of the “elixir” and to the philosopher’s stone that he identifies with Christ, in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. He does, therefore take advantage in the form of an allegory of a concept that alchemists had patiently woven over the centuries. Indeed allegory, in alchemy, gradually emerged from texts written at first with the objective to transmit knowledge and skills. Of course, the alchemists did resort to images and poetic masks to commit to paper a science that they themselves defined as secret; but they endeavored, at least down to the second half of the fourteenth century, not to drift in a dangerous way towards the sacred shores of theology. For example, the *Tractatus parabolicus*, recently edited by Antoine Calvet, is an alchemical commentary

¹⁵ Michela Pereira, *The Alchemical corpus attributed to Raymond Lull* (London, 1989), *passim*; Jocelyn Nigel Hillgarth, *Raymond Lull and Lullism in Fourteenth Century France* (Oxford, 1971), *passim*.

¹⁶ Antoine Calvet “Le *De secretis naturae* du pseudo-Arnaud de Villeneuve: Présentation, édition et traduction,” *Chrysopæia*, 6 (1997–1999), 155–206.

on the Passion of Christ.¹⁷ Christ was for us an example in this art, Pseudo-Arnaud says, and he proceeds to detailing the four forms of passion. The appearance of the number four here is not coincidental. The anonymous author (probably a Franciscan) is very careful not to place the sign of equality between the philosopher's stone and Christ, remaining on the level of comparison. The assimilation of the religious mystery and alchemy, giving birth to theosophy, will only become effective at the very end of the Middle Ages and flourish during the Renaissance. It is thus astonishing to see that in this case a Philippe de Mézières is already flirting with this notion. It is possible that he, himself a mystic and an activist, pragmatic and visionary, had delved into, among other texts, the *Testamentum* or the *Tractatus parabolicus*, even though this latter was not widely distributed.

Can it be concluded, on the ground of such references, that Philippe de Mézières was sensitive to a tradition that he would redirect to a moral and spiritual context through his concept of "sainte alchimie"? One must remain careful. Philippe de Mézières had access to militant traditions advocating a renovation of the world, hatched in the environment of heated and sometimes violent debates within the Franciscan movement that Umberto Eco described so well and made accessible in the *Name of the Rose*, even though there are, as is so often the case with this writer, several "levels" of reading. In Mézières, alchemy is an allegorical garment. The pattern is the opposite of the one in Pseudo-Villeneuve and in Johannes de Rupescissa. The alchemical protocol, the Great Work, is explained in light of the Gospel, of Christ's Passions in the *Tractatus* and the *De Secretis*, while in Mézières, it is the Passion that is illuminated in light of alchemy. In the case of the *Tractatus*, the figure of Christ justifies alchemy, while in the *Songe* it the opposite. In Philippe de Mézières alchemy is situated in a context that is reduced to its moral dimension and amputated of natural philosophy, its core; only the symbolical figure is left.

We shall not go any further in the analysis of Philippe de Mézières's relationships with alchemy. These relationships are perhaps essential to our understanding of his thinking, but they raise more questions

¹⁷ Antoine Calvet, "Le *Tractatus parabolicus* du pseudo-Arnaud de Villeneuve, présentation, édition et traduction," *Chrysopæia*, 5 (1997), 145–71. Together with Antoine Calvet we are preparing the first edition of the *Oratio tragedica seu declamatoria Passionis Domini nostri Ihesu Christi*. Bibliothèque Mazarine, ms. n° 1651, f. 129–209, contemporary to the *Songe*.

than they answer. Philippe de Mézières resorts to the language of alchemy, he shies away from alchemy as a discipline. He refers to alchemy because he knows this will impress his readers and capture their attention. Philippe's religious activism adapts easily to a certain type of rhetoric, an instrument of political action whose tools he found precisely among the Franciscans: those same Franciscans he met in the South, the southern "béguins," and the Spirituals in Spain. Given how frequently words and notions belonging to alchemy are to be found in the *Songe*, this approach cannot be ignored.

We find in the *Songe* then, a distilled essence of the techniques, of the rhetorical strategies of the time, of moral allegory, and of biblical exegesis, all placed in the service of a religious, militant, and political project. We attempted to point to two approaches that shed light on his itinerary and guide it. We only rapidly dealt with the first one, with our discussion of numbers and through the proposal of a grid of writing and reading borrowed from Pseudo-Dionysius. The effects of a holistic representation of society suited perfectly the ends the Celestine Philippe de Mézières imposed on Western society. Propaganda is never far away from religious activism. The adoption of the Dionysian grid takes place within a specific strategy, an obsessive pursuit, that of the "saint passage d'outre mer" [holy passage beyond the seas] that is, the crusade. The second approach consists in the adaptation of the discourse of natural alchemy to the purposes of what can be termed "moral alchemy." There is no doubt that alchemy is a quest and that this feature almost inevitably involves a kind of spiritualization of alchemical writings. It provides an opportunity for an astonishing convergence—the first of its kind to our mind—between the spiritualization of alchemy and royal sanctification. Thus would be born, in a hitherto unknown shape—that of the relations between alchemy and politics—a moral alchemy, a century and a half before the tremendous expansion it will experience thanks to Paracelsius in the second half of the sixteenth century.¹⁸ In the *Songe*, everything happens in the realms of both numerology and of alchemy, as if Mézières made use of "authorized" types of rhetorical tools, even if that meant slightly altering their appearance, in order to meet the needs of the time. Pseudo-Llull or Pseudo-Dionysius lose some of their philosophical dignity

¹⁸ Didier Kahn, *Paracelsisme et alchimie en France à la fin de la Renaissance, 1567–1625* (Geneva, 2007), 36–43.

but are taken as convenient tools, appropriate to the organization and the expression of Mézières's reasoning. What we find in Philippe de Mézières's work, then, is a deliberate affirmation and acceptance of heterogeneousness. The borrowing lacks accuracy but integrating and redirecting these concepts serves, in a pragmatic and deliberate way, the aims of political propaganda.

THE CONSOLATIONS OF WRITING ALLEGORY:
PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES' *LE SONGE DU VIEIL PELERIN*

Andrea Tarnowski

All literature is consolation . . . it's consolation. That's
why it gets written down.

*The History Boys*¹

Certainly, *Le songe du vieil pelerin* is about consolation; its author says he has often despaired, and has wished to be delivered of the prison that shuts in his sinful soul, but he ultimately renounces his woe.² The initial scene of the story presents a man plunged in sadness, while the final tableau shows a soul becalmed. In this sense there is a line of progress in the work: the state of mind of the author, referred to as the Poor Pilgrim, is transformed for the better, led from sinful sadness to holy serenity. Over the course of a long narrative, the pilgrim travels from country to country, seeking reason to hope for himself and his fellow man, and in the end he is consoled; we might say that his literary production is the vehicle of his faith, and that his status as an author is as important as his actions as a character in the tale. The interplay between author and character, established in the work's prologue but recalled throughout, proves key to understanding what consolation the *Songe* offers. For while the narrative recounts a quest for virtue and reform, a continual seeking of righteousness, it is only in the still of a chapel that comfort ultimately descends. The dream vision Mézières describes begins within a prologue that explores his work as an author. The introduction to the *Songe* thus opens a tale and, at the same time, provides its rhetorical and moral justification. The *movement* in the story—the circulation indicated by the characters' travels, as well as by the "currency" they must mint and spend—provides an impetus for the narrative, but quietude comes once the dream and the journeys are over, when the author has finished writing

¹ Alan Bennett, *The History Boys* (New York, 2004), 46.

² "maintefois [il] cheyt en desperation...il desiroit d'estre delivre de la chartre en laquelle son ame pecheresse estoit emprisonnee." *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, ed. G. W. Coopland (Cambridge, 1969, repr. 2009) 1: 88, Prologue.

and given himself over to thought. He begins and ends in the same place, and yet he is renewed; once he has passed on his writerly coin, he can find consolation.

THE CONSOLATORY MODEL

In the beginning of the vision, a radiant lady, Divine Providence, visits the Old Pilgrim to comfort or console him; when she tells him he will soon embark on a voyage around the world, she offers him a travelling companion, his sister Good Hope, to bring him, she says, solace or consolation.³ A Boethian model is evoked in the announcement of the female allegorical figure who arrives to set an immobilized, lamenting author to rights: the Poor Pilgrim should hearken to the teachings of Divine Providence as Boethius must learn from Lady Philosophy.⁴ Boethian consolation also comes to mind when we consider that at the beginning of his work, Boethius must deny as false the friends he has always relied on, the Muses, in order to give Lady Philosophy his trust. In *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, the author confesses that he has lately been too distant from his king because of his devotion to the delightful Lady Solitude.⁵ Though Solitude is truly good—not suspect like Boethius' Muses—the pilgrim will have to forswear her attractions to embark on his travels, surrounded by allegories of virtue and ready for new encounters. The pilgrim's intimacy with Solitude, which implies stasis and *recueillement*, will give way in the first part of the work to a paradigm of movement and circulation.⁶ Solitude does not appear as a figure to supplant the pilgrim's virtuous companions. However, before the end of *Le songe*, the virtues disappear, leaving the pilgrim alone. Divine Providence returns briefly—in Boethius, Lady Philosophy never leaves—and it is only through her teaching that the pilgrim's

³ “[Dieu] m’a mande pour toy reconforter...tu auras tousjours en ta compaignie, pour toy reconforter...ta propre suer germaine...Bonne Esperance appellee” *Le songe*, 1: 90, 91 Prologue.

⁴ Mézières later makes direct reference to Boethius in establishing a reading list of edifying works for King Charles VI: *Le songe*, 2: 222, chap. 229.

⁵ “se estoit esloigne [du roi], voire pour une dame, gracieuse maistresse... Solitude appelle(e), qu’il avoit prinse et espousee” *Le songe*, 1: 86, Prologue.

⁶ Though the need for movement is indeed a founding precept of *Le songe*, it would be more accurate to say that circulation co-exists with, rather than replaces, stasis in this text; the travels described all take place in vision form, while the physical body of the pilgrim remains in place. Only his mind moves.

sorrow lifts. In the end, he is solitary again, brought to consolation by Providence rather than by his quest. His chapel, rather than the world, holds all his comfort. The full-circle structure of the *Songe*, so different from the progressing dialogue of Boethius' *Consolation*, emphasizes individual reflection by leaving its protagonist without interlocutors.

CIRCULATING CURRENCY

While keeping in mind that the narrative returns the author to his point of departure, we must account for the movement it describes. The primary movement-metaphor of the text is money; currency circulates. Mézières starts with the Bible to give money an allegorical cast, citing his source in the first line of the work's prologue: "Il est escript en la saint evvangile que Jesuscrist recita la parole d'un riche homme qui ala en ung grant pelerinage et bailla a ses sergens ses besans, qui en l'evvangile sont appelez talens" [It is written in Holy Scripture that Jesus Christ told the story of a rich man who went on a long pilgrimage and gave his servants his bezants, which in Scripture are called talents] (1:83 Prologue).⁷ The gold bezant is the currency he will evoke throughout, and this choice of coin is significant in itself, on both historical and metaphorical grounds. Rather than using the term *talents* directly from Scriptural parable, Mézières seizes on a word connoting Byzantium and the East; coins struck in the Crusader-founded Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the 12th and 13th centuries bore this name. By the late 14th century, only the island of Cyprus maintained a bezant currency; gold coins struck in France were francs, whereas the most widely circulated gold coins in Europe were the Florentine florin and the Venetian ducat.⁸ By choosing to deal textually in bezants rather than more familiar currencies, Mézières detaches his narrative from the commerce of everyday life. The coins he wants to see minted—bezants represent virtues in action—are accessible to one and all, but have, at the same time, extraordinary value. That his bezants are gold further marks the distance between standard monetary exchange and

⁷ See Mt 25:14–15: "For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one..." The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Bible, National Council of Churches of Christ in America (New York, 1973).

⁸ See Jacques Le Goff, *Le Moyen Age et l'argent* (Paris 2010), esp. 187, 190, 191, and Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1988), 287, 321.

the economy the *Songe* creates; coins that traded hands were historically far more often alloyed silver or silver than gold, and most people would be unlikely to use the more precious metal, but Mézières seeks to highlight the purity and luminosity that he advocates in the moral realm: a gold standard available to everyman. Nostalgically recalling the bygone era of successful crusades as well as Mézières' own time as the chancellor of Cyprus, the bezant additionally figures an ideal or aspiration: reform of the self and society, driven by pious commitment.

To return to the parable of the talents that opens the *Songe*, it establishes the purpose of the allegorical voyage. In the biblical tale, the servants of the rich man must decide how best to use and multiply the coins placed in their safekeeping; in the *Songe*, the characters will seek to distinguish fine from false talents, to see where fine talents are most often minted, and to increase their stock in the world. Corollary money metaphors thus hold an important place in the text; Mézières speaks often of the *mints* that allow money's manufacture, the *arque-mie* or alchemy that results in the pure gold of good works, and the *usure* that permits what is true and holy to circulate from person to person.

Yet such a collection of financial references sits oddly with Mézières' faith-infused dream vision, even given the justification the author draws from his biblical source.⁹ Not only is he deeply convinced of the negative relation of material wealth to truth, he is always quick to condemn those who choose earthly over spiritual riches. The *Songe* singles out as the worst vices those that bear a relationship to money and demonstrate a sinful focus on materiality: pride, avarice and luxury.¹⁰

⁹ Already in 1985, Jeannine Quillet wrote: "Il est remarquable que la référence à la monnaie...soit la métaphore fondamentale destinée à signifier l'oeuvre de réforme de la chrétienté" [It is remarkable that reference to coin...should be the main metaphor to designate the reform of Christianity]. "Figures allégoriques du 'Songe du Vieil Pèlerin' de Philippe de Maizières," in Anne Cazenave and Jean-François Lyotard, eds., *L'art des confins: Mélanges offerts à Maurice de Gandillac* (Paris, 1985), 480–91 at 490.

¹⁰ See *Le songe* 1:307–13, chaps. 44–47. Mézières shows a high degree of consistency throughout his writing in the sins he targets for special condemnation. In *Le songe* (1389), he affirms that in an earlier work, he counseled against "le pechie d'avarice...le regart, par lequel est entendu curieuse, vanite et le peche de la chair...[et] le grant pechie d'orgueil" [the sin of avarice...the gaze, by which is understood curiosity, vanity and the sin of the flesh...[and] the great sin of pride] (1: 87 Prologue). In the Ashmole manuscript of *La sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion de Jhesu Crist en francois* (1389–94), he declares that "trois grans pechies principaux entre les crestiens ont pris grant signorie, c'est assavoir, orgueil avarice et luxure" [three great principal sins have taken full dominion over Christians, to wit, pride, greed and luxury], in

Because pride bespeaks a sense of superiority over others, a desire for power and a display of ambition, one of its principal vehicles is wealth, whether vanity manifests itself in jockeying for court position or seeking ecclesiastical *éclat*. Avarice, in its opposition to generosity and charity, by definition signals the selfish accumulation of goods, and the tightly-held money bag is its most recognizable symbol.¹¹ Luxury expresses the pursuit of sensual pleasure, a penchant for the flesh that is heightened by opulence. Mankind's most egregious sins would thus seem to feed on coin, and Mézières might be expected to repress rather than exploit the thematic of a human taste for lucre.¹²

Faced with the omnipresence of gold in the *Songe*, the question is what value money metaphor has for Mézières as a writer. It is easy enough to effect the transpositions from object to ideal that his allegorical system requires: *besants* or talents, discrete material units that indicate terrestrial wealth, figure the treasure of possibilities for virtuous action that creates spiritual wealth. But the import of the bezants may lie at least as much in what they do as in what they are; their action can be as significant as their form. Money is currency, and is meant to move. It represents objects or notions that travel and that

Abdel Hamid Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and The New Order of the Passion," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts XVIII* (1964), Part III, 44; see also 75. The *Epistre au roi Richart* (1395), which advocates a Franco-English marriage alliance as well as a joint crusade, adjusts this list to name the greatest human scourges as pride, greed and envy (79). In *Le livre de la vertu du sacrement du mariage* (1385–89), the sins first named as responsible for women's unhappiness in marriage are pride, avarice, and then gluttony and luxury together. See *Letter to Richard II*, ed. G. W. Coopland (Liverpool, 1975) 79, and *Le livre de la vertu du sacrement du mariage*, ed. Joan B. Williamson (Washington, 1993), 272. There is of course no originality in considering pride the worst of all the sins, nor in casting *avarice* and *luxure* as capacious categories: *avarice* covers both grasping greed and shrinking miserliness, while *luxure* applies to love of luxury and general extravagance as well as to a proclivity for sex.

¹¹ See, for example, the depiction of this vice in Guillaume de Lorris' *Roman de la rose*, vv. 231–35.

¹² Such an attitude is more evident in his non-fictional work. Mézières' detailed plan for the organization of a crusade, *La sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion de Jhesu Crist en francois*, solves the problem of wealth by declaring that while members of the chivalric order he envisions in the Holy Land would be allowed to possess lands and money, they would be required to hold everything in common, and to draw on funds only as necessity dictated. Any hierarchization of knights by means of fortune would be strictly prohibited. In addition, wealth belonging to the order would be administered by reliable merchants and burghers in the West. Though this stands to reason given the physical distance between the knights and their sources of revenue, Mézières' careful circumscription of individual access to riches shows his concern for guarding against money's corrupting influence. See Hamdy, *La sustance*, 82.

have the same meaning for all those through whose hands they pass. When Mézières recounts the parable of the talents, the necessity of sending good into circulation comes to the fore; he cites the counterexample of the servant who “enfouyt son besant sans marchander ne prester a usure, et offrit a son seigneur son besant tout seul, dont il fu condempne” [buried his bezant without trading or lending at interest, and thus offered back to his lord only the same bezant, for which act he was condemned] (1:83, Prol.). The author sets up the text of the *Songe* proper to correspond to his prologue; each begins with a caution. The first error evoked in the prologue’s biblical tale belongs to the servant who buried, rather than used, his bezant; the first complaint Mézières makes of his fellow Frenchmen when describing contemporary mores in Book I is that they hoard their God-given spiritual riches. He deplores the lack of virtue-wealth’s circulation: “chacun son besant lie en un drappeau, aussi comme pour le mussier dessoubz la terre” [each man wraps his bezant in a cloth as if to hide it beneath the earth] (1:190, chap. 1). Holding, hiding, or stopping money eliminates its worth; only when it travels to another by means of commerce or loan does it fulfill a purpose. Saving buys it no increase, and only in investment can a benefit be realized. In the *Songe*, Mézières will trace the flow of ideas such as humility, unity and obedience that remain absolute and unchangeable in their perfection. But they only *function* as long as they have currency—as long as they are tried, used and communicated. Men must use stable coin in the service of virtuous reform.¹³ Allegory comes with the implication of movement, in particular, the “vertical” movement from manifestation to principle, example to concept. The shining gold bezant represents a deed of impeccable virtue. *Le songe du vieil pelerin* asks no exception to this allegorical rule; by means of fictional narrative, it seeks to lift humanity away from its lower impulses. But it also communicates the importance of what we might call “horizontal” movement: acts and inspiration that must travel from human to human, even while God’s

¹³ For the regulation of trade in the late Middle Ages, the reliability of coins’ weight and the integrity of their metallic composition were a concern of the first order. Nicolas Oresme, Mézières’ near contemporary and the object of his admiration, wrote a landmark treatise on the subject. See Charles Johnson, trans., *The De Moneta of Nicholas Oresme, and English Mint Documents* (London, 1956). For Mézières’ praise of Oresme (as a translator of Aristotle), see *Le songe*, 2: 222, chap. 229. My thanks to both Alan Stahl and Daisy Delogu for emphasizing the importance of *De Moneta* as a cultural document.

service is the ultimate goal. Money has a uniquely terrestrial character and earthly purpose; as such, it is an apt vehicle for representing human activity and human exchange. Every mortal must be the point of transit for thoughts and deeds that lead to God. There is thus a recognition and an accommodation of the human even in the strongest striving to leave off flawed mortal ways.

SORTING THE COINS

As he deploys the metaphor of the bezants, Mézières shows himself intensely concerned not only with the creation or the conduction of value, but also with its assignment. Implicit in the ambition to discover or mint bezants is the precept that currency be true: *bons besants*, sorted out from coins of lighter, suspicious material.¹⁴ The gold must be pure. Likewise, when the author evokes alchemy, it is neither praised nor scorned as such; it is *faulce arquemie* that causes man's ruin, *sainte arquemie* that saves.¹⁵ Adjectives drive assessment; the thing must be examined, understood and judged. Alchemy *per se* seems to stand for Mézières as a neutral term, an enterprise that can target either good or evil depending on the alchemist's intentions.¹⁶ The *Songe* of course aspires to *sainte arquemie*—a human search for improvement, refinement and perfection—but *faulce arquemie* is evoked to chastise and warn.

¹⁴ "mains pesans" (*Le songe*, 1: 97, Prologue).

¹⁵ "Encore est ainsi que parlant en cestui livre par figure du besant de l'evvangile et...de la sainte et faulce arquemie...n'est autre chose, parlant moralement et en figure, que une nouvelle maniere de parler et tracter des vices et des vertuz, en blas-mant les pechiez et les mauvais gouvernemens de ce monde par le nom de la faulce arquemie...et au contraire en attrayant les lisans a bienfaire et a vertuz par le nom et effect de la sainte arquemie..." (*Le songe*, 1: 96–97, Prologue) [Thus it is that speaking through figures in this book about the bezant of the Gospel...and of holy and false alchemy...is nothing else—speaking morally and figuratively—than a new way of speaking about and treating vices and virtues by blaming the sins and bad government of this world with the name of false alchemy...and, on the contrary, by drawing readers to good action and virtue through the name and effect of holy alchemy.]

¹⁶ In *Distilling Knowledge: Alchemy, Chemistry and the Scientific Revolution* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 32–33, Bruce T. Moran writes that though alchemy was condemned by Pope John XXII in 1317, "the situation was different...within the cultural domains established by kings and princes. In the Holy Roman Empire, France, and England, alchemists provided practical service to courts." Joël Blanchard's introduction to his modern French translation of *Le songe* also discusses alchemy as an element of medieval culture générale: see *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008), 28–31.

An even more striking example of differing perspectives on a single term is Mézières' repeated call for the practice of usury. No other use of money was more roundly reviled in the Middle Ages, and requiring interest on a loan would put the lender in a state of mortal sin.¹⁷ Mézières himself devotes a passage in the *Songe* to denouncing usury; when he discusses the reasons why the Church consents to let Jews, whom he calls the "principal enemies of my Father Jesus Christ," live among Christians, he explains that this is "so that Christians should have no occasion to lend usuriously, a thing forbidden to Christians and abominable to God."¹⁸ And yet time and again, the *Songe* advocates *sainte usure*, the holy exchange that will signal true reform in Christendom. Usury can thus prompt either loathing or reverence, depending on its presentation. With the accretion and repetition of metaphors that all add to his greater monetary allegory—the author "preste a usure principalment pour devenir marchand et marchander" [lends with interest primarily so as to become a merchant and engage in commerce] (1: 86, Prol.)—Mézières makes his case for the minting and circulation of figurative money; he casts it in virtue.

One way to explain why Mézières bases an essentially spiritual quest on the language of the marketplace is that his terms make aspiration accessible. His desire for reform targets not only the learned or the powerful, but a broader Christian community. He familiarizes and grounds goals that otherwise might seem abstruse or unattainable. In addition, the conjunction of money and spiritual reform may reflect Mézières' historical context; intense international trade, multiple new currency denominations and political issues attendant on metal debasement would have all camped in the consciousness of a former chancellor of Cyprus, resident of Venice, and adviser to two French kings, providing material vectors for the discussion of spiritual needs. Jeannine Quillet supposes Mézières' recognition of and sympathy for commerce when she says that for the author, "la figure du bon citoyen est celle du marchand" [the figure of the good citizen is that of the merchant]. She finds justification for Mézières' choice of metaphor in the idea that "[les] thèmes majeurs de l'ensemble allégorique de l'oeuvre manifestent les préoccupations d'une société fondée

¹⁷ See Le Goff, *Le Moyen Age et l'argent*, 100–106.

¹⁸ "Juifs, principaulx ennemis de mon Pere Jesuscrist" and "affin que les Crestiens n'ayent occasion de prester a usure, qui est chose aux Crestiens deffendue et abominable a Dieu." (*Le songe*, 2: 284 and 285, chap. 246).

sur un mercantilisme simple” [the major themes of the work’s allegorical whole show the preoccupations of a society based on a simple form of mercantilism].¹⁹ If the exchange and uses of money circa 1400 seem more remarkable for their sophistication than their simplicity, it remains that trade was a ubiquitous activity of essential importance.²⁰

Yet historically-based perspectives do not suffice for the examination of money’s role in Mézières’ allegorical expression; a rhetorical framework can also be of help. Mézières’ work draws an analogy between the function of money and that of language. A word can have various meanings according to how it is received; a notion is changeable because formed and expressed by language, as the examples of “alchemy” and “usury” cited above attest. Language is thus characterized by uncertainty (a term does not spontaneously signify in the same way from one person, place or era to another), even though the primary assumption in *using* language is that understanding can be shared. The essential uncertainty of language is set aside when communication is set in motion; its operative principle must be that meaning is reliably receivable. With money, too, effectiveness must result from agreement among agents. As coin bears no intrinsic worth, those through whose hands it passes must concur in assigning it value. Money and language are similar in that both acquire meaning in circulation. They suppose a system, or an economy, to work—one put in place by their human users.

In relying on their users to function, money and language stand in contrast to God, whose meaning and value cannot be affected by human intervention. His immobility and inalterability are ideals, whereas money and language must be predicated on the real. In the *Songe*, Queen Truth is God’s direct representative; she, too, is not subject to interpretation. In her company, the pilgrim will see where and how value must be properly assigned, while indicating how it is often misconstrued and corrupted. Truth purifies the *besant*. The ideal stands always outside or beyond what passes among men on earth. It provides a focal point, a reminder that contingency can theoretically be shed. Unlike the words called on to express it, Truth is never partial

¹⁹ Quillet, “Figures allégoriques du ‘Songe du Vieil Pèlerin’ de Philippe de Maizières,” 490.

²⁰ See Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, esp. chaps. 11–14.

or precarious. Money strives to *represent* value and language *targets* the rendering of ideas; Truth, or God, simply is.

The idea of an ultimate reference point, a source to which to look so as to make sense of relative truth and value in the world, has an analogy in the author of a text: the presence “beyond” that both oversees and bears witness to the workings of words on a page.

AUTHOR AS GUARANTOR?

There is no novelty in the *topos* of the author as god, the writer as *auctor*; producing and presiding over a text invites easy and immediate comparison to generating and ruling a world. However, for Philippe de Mézières, privileging the place of the author and speaking of him as a governing authority seem to go against the grain. He praises humility as the key virtue just as he condemns pride as the worst vice; the self must be effaced. Within the tale, when Divine Providence appears before the Poor Pilgrim, her first concern is to be sure he retains his humility: “tu dois savoir a mon commaincement... [t']humilier” [you must begin by knowing how to be humble] (1: 90, Prol.). As an author, Mézières avoids any name that would mark his historical existence. His initial introduction of himself is simply as “le filz sa mere” [the son of his mother] (1: 84 Prol.), a tautological presentation that marks him as no different than any other human. Nothing distinguishes him. At the end of his prologue to the text, he forestalls any accusation of self-will or presumption: “devant Dieu fait son protestation que pour chose qu'il ayt escript en cestui livre... ne veult pas demourer en ses diz et escripts obstine ne de propre sens repute” [before God he declares that in what he says and writes, he wishes to show no obstinacy, nor to be thought to hold to his own ideas] (1: 105, Prol.). He flees even oblique self-assertion.

As we have seen, Mézières begins the *Songe* under the aegis of biblical authority, with the parable of the talents. That supreme reference point is then reinforced with interpretation according to “le tres saint et glorieux docteur” Saint Gregory (1: 83, Prol.). The explanation, in other words, does not come from Mézières. The end of his prologue submits the whole text of the *Songe* for the approval of still other authorities: the king of France, the University of Paris, and finally the Holy Church. Mézières' invocation moves from terrestrial to celestial power, his list creating three tiers of desired guarantee. His prologue

both opens and closes, then, with the credit that Mézières' self is not up to providing. After claiming only the status of "his mother's son," he describes himself as the Poor Pilgrim, a scarcely-more-specific designation for every Christian soul. As the Pilgrim begins to dream, in the threshold moment when Divine Providence recognizes both his humanity and authorship while drawing him into allegory's fold, she tells him he will henceforth be known as the *Old* and Poor Pilgrim: "desormais tant comme tu vivras tu seras appelle non tant seulement le Pauvre Pelerin, mais le Vieil et Pauvre Pelerin" (1: 90–91, Prol.). The extra adjective re-marks the author's senescence and decline, even as it distinguishes between the role of composer and that of character. As long as he is only an author, and not both an author and an actor in the tale, Mézières remains, simply, The Poor Pilgrim.

THE LOST *PELERINAGE* AND SELF-CITATION

Given Mézières' repeated claims to near non-existence, the surprise is how much attention he in fact devotes to himself in his author's role. For while his renunciation of a historical name signals his will to suppress the body, the materiality and the individuality that indicate the sinful human condition, Mézières devotes considerable care to constructing his writerly authority. Once he has cited the Bible and St Gregory, he finds means to establish his own authorial ascendancy, embarking on a relatively detailed description of a text the Poor Pilgrim has already written, *Le pelerinage du pauvre pelerin et reconfort de son pere et de sa mere*. The work was an offering to his beloved mentor, the royal court official Bureau de la Rivière, whom Mézières calls Le Gracieux Forestier and through whom he meant to offer counsel to the young French king Charles VI. Because part of this advice concerned Mézières' larger project of the establishment of a crusading order to reform Christianity, he again has occasion to self-cite, speaking of [*La*] *reigle de la nouvelle arquemie de la passion de Jesuscrist*, "qu'il a faicte et escript" [that he composed and wrote] (1: 88, Prol.). He presents these two works just before his dream begins.

The Bible, and St Gregory, and Mézières' own written work offer a platform of moral reliability from which to launch the vision that will encompass the allegorical tale. But Mézières does not leave off his authorial voice once he has established his writerly past; rather, he continues to present his own perspective on his compositions. He

admits, for example, that his writing has failed to reflect or influence reality. After composing *Le pelerinage*, he saw that the virtues he had portrayed and promoted in that work were scarcely to be found in the world around him:

...pour multiplier son pauvre besant...[le Pauvre Pelerin] avait servi a six roys...avoit este en personne a la court de plusieurs papes... Et toutefois il lui sembloit par experience que, es dictes cours royales et papalles, il estoit fort a faire aujourduy de trouver en vraye existence les...vertuz (1: 87–88, Prol.).

[...to multiply his poor bezant...[the Poor Pilgrim] had served six kings...had visited in person the court of several popes... And nevertheless his experience made him think that in said royal and papal courts, it was a difficult task to find virtue in real life]

His project of a chivalric order, too, has failed to come to fruition, despite four decades of effort on his part: “il n’avoit peu tant faire...qu’il peust ledit besant faire mestre a l’estampe affin qu’il eust son cours” [he had not been able to do enough to mint said bezant so that it could circulate properly] (I: 88, Prol.). *Le songe du vieil pelerin* will be one more attempt to express Mézières’ views and convince his readers.

The author himself addresses the issue of why he speaks so much of his earlier *Pelerinage du pauvre pelerin* in the prologue to the *Songe*. His goal is not to confirm his own authority, which would taint him with arrogance. Rather, he promotes reiteration of what is true and right. The *Pelerinage* already set forth precepts and vocabulary now reprised in the *Songe*: “le fondement et principe de la nouvelle archemie figuree pour forgier bons besans...sont plainement descripts ou Pelerinage du Pauvre Pelerin” [the foundation and principle of the new metaphorical alchemy for minting good bezants...are fully described in the *Pilgrimage of the Poor Pilgrim*] (1, 98: Prol.). Metaphors and themes should reappear and yield their value indefinitely, not only within a single work but also from one text to another. If they encourage virtue and moral reform, they cannot lose their power. Repetition constitutes an effort to make language more certain, more perfectly representative of an ideal; returning to a figure or reusing an image is an attempt to identify expression with concept, to lessen the contingent nature of words.

Nevertheless, Mézières affirms that *Le pelerinage* and *Le songe* are “deux livres tractans de diverses matieres” (1: 98, Prol.) [two books that treat of different subjects]. The latter is not simply a retracing

or an elaboration of the former. *Le pelerinage*, which has been lost, is unavailable for analysis; we must refer to the author's comparison of the works to infer what it says. The first aim Mézières cites is consolatory; *Le pelerinage* sought the "recreation et consolation" of the Forester and his wife (1: 85, Prol.). Examples, stories from the author's youth and tales of worthy and false knights comprised the narrative, in which men of pious moral courage could be sorted from those whose prowess bespoke an attachment to worldly glory. Mézières uses the vocabulary of coin to say that his intent in *Le pelerinage* was to "prester a usure de son petit besant" [lend his small bezant at interest] (1: 85, Prol.); he gave his talent/bezant to the Forester through writing. He developed the metaphors of alchemy and the mint (1: 85, Prol.) Ultimately, however, his text was addressed not only to the Forester, but to King Charles VI; *Le pelerinage* provided both consolation and advice. The Forester (Bureau de la Rivière), as Charles VI's trusted confidant, was the channel through whom Mézières hoped to inculcate sound moral precepts in the monarch.²¹ Mézières says he wrote *Le pelerinage* in order to "devenir marchand et marchander" [become a merchant and enter into commerce] (1: 86, Prol.) with the king. Already in his earlier work, then, he offered allegorical fiction for the purpose of moral instruction as his currency, or means of communication.

All this makes *Le pelerinage* seem very similar to *Le songe*. The dream vision in *Le songe* is also built on values-laden stories, figures and examples, and Mézières announces as his pious goal the moral improvement of Charles VI, the "White Falcon": "descripre sobrement, avec la doubtance de Dieu, le songe... par telle maniere que ce soit a la gloire de Dieu, consolation des lisans et aucune edification [du]... Blanc Faucon" [to describe the dream without ornament and in the fear of God... in such a way that it be to the glory of God, for the consolation of readers, and for some edification of... the White Falcon] (1: 89, Prol.). The whole third book of the *Songe* will be devoted to consideration of the White Falcon's character and duties, and the vast sub-allegories of this part of the work all converge on the idea of Charles serving virtue and governing well. What, then, distinguishes the *Songe* from *Le pelerinage* if they share metaphors, objectives and at least some structural elements? The one feature of the *Songe* that necessarily differs from its predecessor is its prologue. It is the place where

²¹ On La Rivière, see Françoise Autrand, *Charles VI* (Paris, 1986), 156–58.

Mézières positions himself as both author and character, discusses *Le pelerinage* as evidence of his authorial status, and initiates a dream-vision that will bring the *Songe* back to *him* and his preoccupations.

THE PLACE OF THE PROLOGUE

A core trait of the prologue's composition is the way it introduces the Poor Pilgrim's vision. First, we read of Mézières' previous work, then the dream allegory is initiated, and finally the author exits his fiction to again reflect on his writing—this time, the *Songe* itself. The prologue closes with authorial remarks; only in Book 1 does the allegorical tale recommence. Placed between two passages in the authorial voice and two discussions of authorial intent, the beginning of the dream fiction acts as a bridge from one discussion to the next, and marks a transition in the author's role. Within the prologue, Mézières gives himself new material to comment on, a new scenario to interpret; he uses the opportunity to demonstrate what has changed since *Le pelerinage*.

We recall that after reviewing his earlier attempts to reinforce moral probity in the world, *Le pelerinage* and [*La*] *reigle de la nouvelle arquemie de la passion de Jesuscrist*, the Poor Pilgrim—the figure of the author—was in a state of despondency over their failure. Suffering in his solitude, he even wished to die: “le Pauvre Pelerin eut si grant douleur en sa solitude que plusieurs foiz...il desiroit d'estre delivre de la chartre en laquelle son ame pecheresse estoit emprisonnee” [the Poor Pilgrim felt such pain in his solitude that often...he wished to be delivered of the jail in which his sinful soul was imprisoned] (1: 88, Prol.). He felt himself unable to augment his spiritual wealth, to increase his supply of coin in order to lend it out (1: 88, Prol.). He prayed to the Virgin with tears and sighs; disheartened, he fell asleep, and so entered his dream. He found himself in a chapel dedicated to Mary; naming the patroness of this space connects the dream experience to the prayers the pilgrim offered in his waking life. The chapel dream-site also guarantees the authenticity and goodness of the events that will transpire. Lastly, it prepares a scene of election; the author will be chosen. Divine Providence appears and announces that because of the pilgrim's desire for reform, his longing to see sound money minted and holy alchemy practiced throughout the world, he has been designated by God to work for the good of humanity (1: 90–91, Prol.). She is there to comfort and console him. She renames him, as noted earlier; the Poor Pilgrim who writes acquires an additional dimension

connecting his authorship to his in-tale self when he becomes the Old and Poor Pilgrim. But then he is renamed again: for the purposes of the allegorical narrative to follow (1: 91, Prol.), he is Ardent Desire, the logical link to the repeated use of *desir* to describe his most essential quality. Divine Providence explains that many virtues have left the world in despair over its corruption; now, because God wants man to reform, the virtues will return to the world to offer their coin and see whether it can circulate. The last injunction Providence delivers to Ardent Desire is to rise and depart on his messenger-reformer's mission. Later in the tale, further proof will come that Ardent Desire is in charge of the journey when he steps forward to act as guide to the virtues during their world travels (1:220, chap. 9). They far surpass him in perfection, but on earth, they recognize his leadership.

Within the confines of the work's prologue, then, the character Ardent Desire is introduced and elected for his extraordinary task, while the author, the Poor Pilgrim or the Old and Poor Pilgrim, remains openly in command of the text. The beginning of the dream is both preceded and followed by the author's commentary. Mézières ensures a particularly striking transition from character to authorial role at the end of Divine Providence's speech, when she is reassuring Ardent Desire as to his enterprise. The narrative suddenly breaks for the authorial voice to resurface: "Et ce souffise largement du Prologue du songe ou de la vision par Providence revelee" [And that should more than suffice for the Prologue of the dream or vision revealed by Providence] (1: 95, Prol.).

Mézières then re-initiates discussion of how *Le songe* should be read. He suggests that those of good faith will understand the tale as moral instruction, while others, too pained by the truth, will simply choose to consider it a dream (1: 95, Prol.). Inveterate sinners will certainly criticize his work.²²

THE AUTHOR, THROUGH ALLEGORY

It is inevitable, Mézières writes, that men who refuse virtuous commitment should reject his teachings; however, if right-thinking readers are overwhelmed or disoriented by his elaborate allegories, he stands

²² Mézières' comments at this juncture are relatively pointed, as he targets members of the king's family and entourage rather than ill-doers in general; see *Le songe*, 1: 103–104, Prologue.

ready to offer authorial help. Mézières' steady consciousness of his authorial position lies in a signature, or "catchword" phrase analyzed long ago by Janet M. Ferrier: "en parlant moralement."²³ The phrase, which might be translated as either "figuratively speaking" or "morally speaking," constitutes a marker of the author's activity. That is, Mézières constantly signals to his readers his artifice or technique; he is explicit about every gesture toward allegory. At the same time that he deploys figures by means of both repetition and elaboration, he points out and explains, with authorial perspective, what he is about. He makes no attempt to cover his rhetorical tracks, to pull the reader into a suspension of disbelief; on the contrary, he is there at every turn, inviting readers to witness his authorial actions. Each "en parlant moralement" is a reminder that the text is willfully shaped and represents no fatality of composition. But Mézières does more than point to his use of the allegorical mode; he also lay out what each allegory means. His author's remarks in the Prologue address the issue of the confused or allegorically overburdened reader:

...quiconques fait escriptures, comprenant grandes et longues ystoires et diverses matieres en paraboles ou par figures, qui ne sont pas bien entendibles sans aucune glose ou exposition...[donne] matiere aux lisans [ses] escriptures de grant ennuy de non lyre, mais plus de tout laisser et de l'escripture blasmer... Et pour obvier a ceste doubte raisonnable, le Vieil Pelerin par maniere de table, de glose et de exposition, en la fin de cest present Prologue met par escript les nom divers de cestui Songe figure...et a chacun nom met son exposition et entendement cler (1: 102, Prol.).

[whoever writes books containing great and long stories and various subjects presented through parables or figures—books not easily understood without glosses or explanation—puts his readers out so that they do not want to read, but rather are ready to leave everything alone and criticize the book... And to guard against this plausible fear, the Old Pilgrim has included at the end of this Prologue a list of the various names in this imagined Dream so as to provide a kind of table, gloss or presentation...and for each name he gives a clear explanation and meaning.]

²³ See Janet M. Ferrier, "The Old Pilgrim's Catch-words: Notes on *Parlant Moralement* and *Quel Merveille* in *Le songe du vieil pelerin*," in *History and Structure of French: Essays in the Honour of Professor T. B. W. Reid*. F. J. Barnett, A. D. Crow, C. A. Robson, W. Rothwell and S. Ullmann, eds. (Oxford, 1972), 99–116.

In this offer to make understanding easy, Mézières directly exercises power over the way his vision should be received. He metes out interpretative directions. For both the creation or minting of his text, and its proposed circulation, he makes his presence felt. For all his refusal to claim the historical name “Philippe” or “Mézières” rather than one of his allegorical identities, he never hesitates to call himself an author, and refers to himself frequently in this role. Yet he is not *L’Acteur*, a personification or representative of his function; while systematically allegorizing himself as *le Vieil Pelerin* and as *Ardent Desir*, he does not seek to put his authorship on an allegorical plane. The author is what he remains before, during and after the vision; it is his version of a historical existence. The capacity to write is the *besant* at his disposal, his coin for commerce with his fellow man and God.²⁴

The Old Pilgrim is consoled by his authorial status, or rather, he is consolable once he has written. The experience of crossing the world to promote the bezants of virtue has left him deeply disappointed in humankind, and desire, even ardent, has not ensured success. The paradigm of circulation—of words, of action—has failed him, and the communication he hoped would result in persuasion has instead been met by resistance or indifference. “Horizontal” movement has proven blocked. At the end of the text, Divine Providence relieves him of further responsibility for spreading the gospel of reform; he has made his best effort with his writing. That leaves Mézières his “vertical” movement: the effort at transcendence, which his work demonstrates, and the necessity of looking to God, and God’s agents, for comfort. With

²⁴ Mézières avers near the beginning of his Prologue, when he has cited the bezants of both great lords and poor men, that in reading the parable of the talents, he was prompted to recognize his own bezant, “qui n’estoit pas de petit prix” [which was not of little value] (*Le songe*, 1: 84). He explains that though he had delayed a long time before “becoming a merchant,” he was finally spurred to begin lending out his coin. The result was *Le pelerinage du pauvre pelerin*. We can infer from this that Mézières’ talent—in both senses of the term—is to communicate his message with the written word. The other instance in this introduction of Mézières stamping a bezant as his own occurs in the context of his long-cherished plans for a knightly order; he writes that he “avoit forgie ung bezant qui devoit estre plaisant a toute la crestiente par l’espace de quarante ans continuelz, touchant au saint passage d’oultre mer” (*Le songe*, 1: 88, Prologue) [continually for forty years, he had minted a bezant which should have pleased all Christendom, and whose object was the holy passage outremer]. Given that the grand objective of Mézières’ written oeuvre is moral-religious reform, and that such reform, in his view, would naturally lead to a new crusade to recapture the East, the nature of these two bezants is not dissimilar; they constitute a means and an end.

the help of Lady Providence, in his chapel, the Old Pilgrim knows serenity. The final passage of *Le songe* presents him in prayer, marveling at God's goodness. But his last phrase goes still to the benefits of writing; the image Mézières conjures is of the pilgrim who "[recapitule] en gros en son entendement... son songe ou vision" (2: 514, chap. 315) [reviews generally in his mind his dream or vision]. He reflects on his own work. This is *his* vision, the one his text portrays. He thinks of the lady virtues who have peopled the tale, and who are the author's depiction of qualities, rather than qualities themselves. *Le songe* closes the circle of textual self-referencing with the word "[le] dit songe," or "said dream;" the consoled Mézières leaves his readers with a reminder of textual presence, the volume he has composed.

CONTEMPLER LE MIROIR DE LA PASSION: PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES ET LES MYSTIQUES

Anna Loba

Utopiste, grand rêveur, réformateur de la chrétienté, Philippe de Mézières écrit son *Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage et reconfort des dames mariées* entre 1385 et 1389, lors de son séjour au couvent des Célestins. Comme beaucoup de ses contemporains, moralistes, prédicateurs, auteurs des traités didactiques et des ouvrages satiriques, il conçoit la réalité conjugale comme une réalité malheureuse, malade, pernicieuse, une réalité qui demande d'être secourue et guérie. Loin pourtant de ridiculiser et rabaisser le mariage, le « Vieil solitaire » se transforme en « phisicien » et en « lapidaire » pour soulager les souffrances des femmes et des hommes mariés. Dès le prologue il déclare se soucier surtout du public féminin, ce sont les femmes qu'il veut « conforter » et « reconforter », c'est à elles qu'il s'adresse spécialement à cause de leur fragilité naturelle¹.

Si le but du livre semble clair, sa matière est extrêmement complexe. Philippe de Mézières se laisse entraîner souvent par son « imagination effervescente », pour reprendre la formule que Joël Blanchard applique à l'écriture du *Le songe du vieil pelerin*². Je me propose d'aborder cette oeuvre consciente du défi que je me suis donné.

Le *Livre* comparé au « miroir reluisant a .iiij. faces polies » (46, l. 5) est divisé en quatre parties, correspondant aux quatre faces du miroir. La première montre les noces spirituelles du Christ et de son Église, dont le mariage chrétien constitue la figure. La deuxième face—les noces mystiques de la Vierge Marie—illustre les voies difficiles du rachat de la race humaine. La troisième face montre le mariage de l'homme et de la femme comme le reflet des noces spirituelles du Christ et de l'Église.

¹ « La dame a trop plus grant mestier de reconfort pour sa fragilité feminine que l'omme n'a qui est ou doit estre de plus forte complexion » (308, ll. 24–26). Toutes les citations selon l'édition : Philippe de Mézières, *Le Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*, ed. Joan B. Williamson (Washington, 1993). Les chiffres entre les parenthèses indiquent les pages et lignes de cette édition.

² Joël Blanchard, « Introduction », in Philippe de Mézières, *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, trans. Joël Blanchard (Paris, 2008), 25.

Enfin la quatrième présente le lien spirituel de Dieu et de l'âme, en se servant de l'exemple de Griseldis comme modèle à imiter pour toute femme mariée³. Le thème du miroir est ici très important et il demanderait un développement beaucoup plus large. J'en ai déjà parlé à une autre occasion⁴.

Si pour Philippe le mariage est atteint d'un mal qu'il faut soigner, il voit le remède dans le retour à ses sources spirituelles et dans son ouvrage, il se propose d'analyser l'essence du mariage du point de vue théologique. Il renoue donc avec la tradition patristique qui voit dans le mariage un mystère de la foi. Dans le sillon de saint Paul et de son exégète, saint Augustin, Philippe reprend la métaphore de l'union du Christ et de son Église, qui font une seule chair, comme l'homme et la femme. Elle est contenue, rappelons-le dans un passage important de l'Épître aux Ephésiens: «C'est pourquoi l'homme quittera son père et sa mère, il s'attachera à sa femme, et tous deux ne seront qu'une seule chair. Ce mystère est grand: je déclare qu'il concerne le Christ et l'Église» (Ép 5, 31–32). Le mot grec *mysterion* employé par l'Apôtre renvoie à une réalité «mystérieuse» qui ne se laisse pas comprendre par la raison mais seulement par la foi, est traduit en latin par *sacramentum*. Depuis le XII^e siècle on reconnaît dans ce passage l'origine du «sacrement de mariage⁵». Le mystère de l'union conjugale est vu comme le symbole de l'union du Christ avec son Église. Dans ma lecture du *Livre* je chercherai à expliquer le caractère de l'analogie entre la Passion et le mariage à laquelle Mézières revient constamment. Je chercherai à comprendre d'où vient l'importance de la méditation de la Passion pour les époux et pourquoi Philippe attache-t-il une telle importance à l'acte de la mémorisation de la Passion du Christ. Cet intérêt pour les pratiques, pour ne pas dire exercices spirituels fait-il de

³ Voir Élie Golenistcheff-Koutouzoff, *Étude sur «Le livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage et reconfort des dames mariées» de Philippe de Mézières* (Belgrade, 1937), 15–16; Joan B. Williamson, «Philippe de Mézière's Book for Married Ladies: A Book from the Entourage of the Court of Charles VI», in *The Spirit of the Court*, ed. Glyn S. Burgess and Robert A. Taylor (Cambridge, 1985), 393–94.

⁴ Anna Loba, «Teraz widzimy jakby w zwierciadle, niejasno. Motyw lustra w późnośredniowiecznych francuskich traktatach dydaktycznych» [Nous voyons, à présent, dans un miroir, en énigme. Le motif du miroir dans les traités didactiques de la fin du Moyen Âge], in *Antyk, prawda i fałsz w średniowieczu*, ed. Jacek Kowalski and Tomasz Ratajczak (Poznań, 2011), 75–84.

⁵ Voir Jean Gaudemet, *Le Mariage en Occident. Les mœurs et le droit* (Paris, 1987), 47–48; Jean-Claude Bologne, *Histoire du mariage en Occident* (Paris, 1997), 134.

lui nécessairement un mystique ? C'est une question à laquelle je vais essayer de répondre dans la partie finale de ce texte.

LE MARIAGE SPIRITUEL ET LA PASSION

Selon Philippe de Mézières, le lien spirituel entre les époux, qu'il appelle le « mariage spirituel » est le reflet du lien unissant l'âme humaine et le Christ. Ainsi, l'image du Christ-Époux, connue de l'Évangile et des visions des mystiques, est utilisée par Philippe pour identifier les époux terrestres au Christ et instruire les femmes que leur devoir de chrétiennes est d'aimer ceux à qui elles sont liées par le sacrement du mariage.

Mais ce qui semble essentiel dans la réflexion de Philippe de Mézières c'est l'exaltation de la correspondance entre le mariage et la Passion. L'auteur en est parfaitement conscient lorsque dans livre 2, chapitre 20 de son *Livre* il essaie de répondre aux objections des lecteurs qui pourraient être étonnés par la place accordée à la méditation de la Passion dans un traité sur le sacrement du mariage : « selonc la prolixité du traictié de la Passion de Jesu Crist en ce livre contenue, cestui livre deveroit mieulx estre intitulé *De la Passion de Jesu Crist* que *Des sacremens de mariage* selonc l'ymagination d'aucuns » (195, ll. 23–26). La raison de ce parallélisme s'expliquerait à travers l'histoire de la mise en place des sacrements dans la théologie chrétienne.

En commentant l'Évangile de saint Jean, saint Augustin explique que les sacrements prennent leur origine sur la croix. Comme Adam fut endormi pour que la mère de tous les vivants soit tirée de son flanc, de même le Christ meurt sur la croix pour que la mère de nouveaux vivants sorte de son côté droit, ouvert par le coup de lance de Longin : « Ici, le second Adam, inclinant la tête, a dormi sur la croix, pour qu'une épouse lui soit formée de ce qui a coulé du côté de celui qui dormait⁶. »

Philippe reprend presque mot à mot les idées de l'évêque d'Hippone en écrivant :

⁶ « Hic secundus Adam inclinato capite in cruce dormiuit ut inde formaretur ei coniux quod latere dormientis effluxit » (120, 2). Voir Saint Augustin, *Homélies sur l'Évangile de saint Jean*, trans. Marie-François Berrouard, in *Oeuvres complètes (latin-français)*, t. 75, ed. Radbodus Willems (Bibliothèque augustinienne) (Paris, 2003), 334–35.

Lors a l'ouvrir du costé, aveuc le sanc et l'iaue, issirent habondamment et amoureuement les sains sacremens de l'Eglise par une maniere de douaire distribuee a son espouse, nostre mere sainte Eglise, en cestui monde faisant son pelerinage. Et par especial et au propos de ceste presente matere, de la grant fontaine sourgant, c'est de la grande et precieuse plaie susdite, yssi avec les autres sacremens le sacrement de mariage entre Jesu Crist et l'Eglise, entre Dieu et l'ame crestienne, et entre l'omme et la femme. (97, ll. 28–36)

Dans *Le Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*, la Passion est associée aux noces mystiques. Philippe parle de l'« alliance et perpetuelle confederacion », du « grant mariage », des « noces les plus grandes qui onques furent faites en ce monde » (75, ll. 8–9; 76, ll. 19, 15–16).

Philippe de Mézières invite donc les époux chrétiens à lire son livre et méditer la Passion du Christ pour comprendre que l'amour du Christ se reflète dans les relations entre les êtres humains, en particulier dans le lien constitué par le mariage. Il leur promet que grâce à cette méditation leur mariage deviendra « plus saint, plus doulz et plus atrempéz que autrefois n'a esté » et qu'ils seront consolés (76, ll. 21–22). Les femmes mariées, premières et privilégiées destinataires du *Livre*, doivent contempler la souffrance du Christ, tout en la traitant comme un remède pour le corps et l'âme: « Se la dame mariee donques malcontente et malade se vauldra bien mirer en cestui exemple precieux, en cestui miroir plain de larmes de la piteuse mort de son Expoulx immortel, certainement elle sera bien purgie de toute sa maladie et amera parfaitement son mari doulcement et saintement comme lui » (272, ll. 8–13). Philippe de Mézières n'arrête pas de recommander à ses lectrices de voir dans le Christ, Époux parfait, le reflet de leurs maris terrestres, faillibles et imparfaits.

Si, en effet l'auteur du *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* dirige son attention particulière vers le public féminin, il est persuadé aussi de l'utilité de son livre pour tout autre chrétien. Il en appelle donc à plusieurs reprises tous ses lecteurs potentiels: « hommes et femmes, josnes, vieux et mariéz » (79, ll. 21–22) et leur propose « une nouvelle devotion », dont le but est de « rafreschir (...) es cuers des lisans la Passion du doulx Jesu » (48, ll. 4–5).

NOCES MYSTIQUES

Si la contemplation de la Passion, est un exercice spirituel bien connu et Philippe de Mézières ne fait que confirmer le modèle de la piété axée sur le Christ souffrant dans les derniers siècles du Moyen Âge, l'intérêt de sa démarche est dans la fonction qu'il donne à cette méditation et

dans le rapport aux attitudes mystiques fréquentes dans son époque. La métaphore des noces mystiques mène Philippe à proposer à ses lecteurs et lectrices une méditation de la Passion du Christ conforme aux sept heures canoniques de la journée⁷. Les matines correspondent à l'arrestation de Jésus, l'heure de prime à son jugement devant Pilate, l'heure de tierce au couronnement d'épines, l'heure de midi (sexe) au crucifiement, l'heure de none à sa mort, les vêpres à la déposition de la croix, les complies à la mise au tombeau. Philippe fait revivre les moments de la Passion en évoquant les détails touchants, inconnus des récits évangéliques et qui se retrouvent dans de nombreux ouvrages de piété qui prolifèrent dès le début du XIV^e siècle. Il souligne la beauté de Jésus: sa «bele face», ses «biaus yeux», sa «belle char virginale, plus blanche et plus tendre que la flour de liz», (82, ll. 12, 14, 19–20), ses «beles mains, qui fourmerent le ciel et la terre» (83, ll. 30–31) par opposition à la cruauté et violence des souffrances qui lui ont été infligées. Au moment de la flagellation, le sang de Jésus coule «de toutes pars de son corps a grans ruissiaus» (82, ll. 21–22), la couronne d'épines lui perce la tête «jusques a la cervelle» (83, l. 11), lorsqu'il est cloué à la croix, ses bras et ses mains sont étirés de force à l'aide des cordes (85, ll. 14–19), il est devenu «deffigurés et horrible a veoir comme un serpent» (86, ll. 16–17).

Dans ce recours à la visualisation et nous pouvons reconnaître les traits de la piété caractéristiques pour le XIV^e siècle. Comme beaucoup d'autres auteurs Philippe invite ses lecteurs à abandonner pour un temps «les cures de ce monde» (76, ll. 17–18) et faire travailler l'imagination, en les exhortant: «vous peserez bien en la balance de vostre ymagination» (76, ll. 18–19). Par la répétition des épithètes «piteuse», «lacrimable», «amere», «dolereuse» il vise à «amolier» les coeurs (95, l. 26), provoquer la compassion, arracher des larmes.

Mais ces grands moments de la Passion de Jésus-Christ qui sont ou doivent être l'objet de la méditation des époux égarés deviennent pour Philippe une image des noces. La Passion du Christ, aussi paradoxal que cela paraît, est donc figuration du festin nuptial. La façon dont Philippe explique ce rapprochement est très révélatrice. Il procède à une exegèse allégorique ou une extension analogique: la prison dans la

⁷ Une bonne partie de méditations françaises dérivent du *Libellus de meditatione Passionis Christi per septem diei horas*, connu sous le nom de Bède (PL 94, col. 561–68), oeuvre d'un Cistercien du XIV^e siècle d'après André Wilmart. Voir Geneviève Hasenohr, *La Littérature religieuse*, in *Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*, vol. VIII/1, (Heidelberg, 1988), 289.

maison du Grand Prêtre est comparée à la « chambre parée » (81, l. 28) où l'Époux passe la veille de ses noces, la colonne de pierre à laquelle il est attaché, devient le « biau lit de repos » (81, ll. 28–29). Le manteau de pourpre dont les soldats de Pilate revêtent Jésus après l'avoir dénudé devient pour Philippe un magnifique habit de noces (82, ll. 22–24), ses plaies et blessures, des splendides bijoux dont l'Époux se pare (83, ll. 26–31), les clous qui transpercent les mains, les bouquets de roses (85, l. 20), le mont de Calvaire, le beau palais où les noces sont célébrées, décoré des crânes de suppliciés et de débris puants en guise des fleurs (88, ll. 32–35). L'image des noces engendre l'analogie du repas, pendant lequel au lieu des viandes et boissons délicieuses on sert à l'Époux « seulement fel, mirre et vin aigre » (89, l. 10).

En même temps l'évocation des noces royales et du banquet s'associe chez Philippe aux « noces de l'Agneau » de l'Apocalypse⁸. Philippe rappelle que le Christ lui-même est un Agneau pascal « bien rotis en l'arbre de la vraie croix par le feu d'infinites tribulacions et orribles tourmens » (93, ll. 6–7), « doulz Aignelet au solail rosti sur l'arbre de la croys » (271, l. 25)⁹. Il peut répéter après l'Apôtre : « Heureux sont ceux qui sont invités au banquet des noces de l'Agneau » (Ap 19, 9). La contemplation et la méditation permettent de retrouver d'abord l'analogie entre la mort et la souffrance du Christ et les tourments de la vie conjugale et ensuite l'analogie entre l'Agneau et le banquet nuptial.

LE COEUR ET LA CROIX

Le but ultime de la contemplation est selon Philippe d'inscrire la mémoire de la Passion dans le coeur des époux, voire de tous les fidèles : la souffrance de Jésus doit être « ruminee en fait, en dit, (et) en

⁸ « Les noces de l'Agneau sont venues, et son épouse s'est parée » (Ap 19, 7).

⁹ L'utilisation du terme « rôti » pour désigner les tourments du Christ sur la croix ne semble pas avoir été rare. Un exemple très significatif à cet égard, provenant du *Livre de crainte amoureuse* de Jean Barthélemy, est cité notamment par Johan Huizinga : « Car ainsi l'aigneau de Pasques entre deux feux de bois ou de charbon estoit cuit convenablement et roty, ainsi le doulx Jesus le jour du Vendredi sacré fut en la broche de la digne croix mis, attaché et lié entre les deux feux de très angoisseuse mort et passion, et très ardente charité et amour qu'il avoit à nos âmes et à nostre salut, il fut comme roty et langouresement cuit pour nous saulver. » Voir Johan Huizinga, *L'Automne du Moyen Âge*, trans. Julia Bastin (Paris, 1980), 243. L'image de la chair du Christ rôtie pour le salut du monde est encore exploitée par Marguerite de Navarre dans ses oeuvres spirituelles. Voir Marguerite de Navarre, *Chansons spirituelles*, éd. Georges Dottin (Genève, Paris, 1971), 146; eadem, *Les Prisons*, éd. Simone Glasson (Genève, 1978), 382.

escript et en devote pensee» (209, ll. 8–9). L'écriture et la lecture, la méditation et la pratique la plus fréquente du signe de croix sur la poitrine avec les pouces doivent conduire à graver dans le cœur de chaque homme la trace de cet événement fondateur. La marque mnésique de la Passion empreinte dans le cœur reste pour Philippe de Mézières une sorte de stigmat.

La stigmatisation, l'identification d'un être humain au Christ crucifié par l'impression des cinq plaies en sa chair se trouve dans les plus grands témoignages du mouvement mystique de la fin du Moyen Âge que Philippe de Mézières connaissait ou du moins il en a entendu parler¹⁰. Dans son *Livre* il évoque l'histoire d'un moine devot ayant une vision pendant laquelle le Christ lui a parlé en lui recommandant de l'accompagner sur le chemin de croix par moyen d'un souvenir constant de ses souffrances engageant tous les sens et tout le corps du fidèle :

Tu m'aideras a porter ma croys par une piteuse et continuele memoire en ton cuer et vraye compassion, et en ta bouche en moy regraciant devotement sans simulation, en tes oreilles par volentiers ouyr mes paines et dolours de mon amere Passion, et en ton dos par penitence et propre flagellation. (209, ll. 20–24)

Dans un autre exemple cité par Philippe, un moine dominicain jouit d'une vision pendant laquelle il reçoit le don de partager les souffrances du Christ, des stigmates spirituels : « Li estoit advis que ses mains et ses piés (...) li estoient trespéciés de grans cloux de fer bien agus (...) que un glave tres agu soudainement vint a lui et lui trespéra le cuer ensemble a tout une tres merveilleuse douleur » (210, ll. 12–18).

Les descriptions des pratiques de la stigmatisation du corps injointes par la méditation sont fournies par les écrits de Jean de Ruysbroeck (1293–1381) et d'Henri Suso (1295/7–1366). Le premier insiste sur l'intensité de l'expérience mystique et sur son impact sur le corps : « Une telle tendresse sensible et compatissante, jointe à l'évocation saisissante et à la considération *intime* des plaies du Christ, peuvent croître au point que l'on a l'impression de *sentir* en son propre cœur et en tous ses membres les plaies et les blessures du Christ¹¹. » Henri Suso ne se contentait pas de méditer la Passion, il la jouait pour lui

¹⁰ Voir André Vauchez, « Les stigmates de saint François et leurs détracteurs dans les derniers siècles du Moyen Âge », *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 80:2 (1968), 597.

¹¹ Jan van Ruusbroec, *Les Noces spirituelles*, 2, trans. André Louf, in *Écrits*, t. 2 (Spiritualité Occidentale) (Bégrolles-en-Mauges, 1993), 145.

tout seul, la nuit, dans la solitude de son couvent : « toutes les nuits, après Matines, au lieu habituel, c'est-à-dire à la salle du chapitre, il s'abîmatit dans la compassion de tout ce qu'avait souffert le Christ, son Seigneur et son Dieu¹². » Il s'est fabriqué une croix sur laquelle il a planté trente clous en honneur et reconnaissance de toutes les plaies que Jésus-Christ a souffertes pour nous prouver son amour et il l'a portée sur ses épaules, cachée sous les vêtements¹³.

La sensibilité à la dévotion aux plaies du Christ tourne Philippe vers une forme très particulière de la stigmatisation de la chair. En effet, il cite dans son *Livre* plusieurs variantes de la légende, ou topos hagiographique du « cœur inscrit¹⁴. » La plus célèbre version de cette légende se trouve dans la vie de saint Ignace d'Antioche, telle qui est connue par exemple dans la *Légende dorée* de Jacques de Voragine. Saint Ignace ne cessait pas d'invoquer le nom de Jésus-Christ pendant son martyre, car, comme il expliquait à ses bourreaux, il portait ce nom gravé dans son cœur. Pour s'assurer de la vérité de ses paroles, après la mort du saint, on a extrait son cœur, et après l'avoir coupé en deux, on a trouvé le nom de Jésus-Christ grave en lettres d'or. Philippe raconte la légende de saint Ignace (173–174) et il en rappelle une autre dont le héros est un martyr « portoit en son cuer les stimates—c'est les enseignes de la mort et Passion de son Dieu » (212, ll. 14–15). Lorsqu'on a ouvert son cœur, on a découvert « l'empreinte entaillie et cavee d'un crucefis » (212, ll. 20–21)¹⁵. Une histoire pareille concerne « un prieur des freres prescheurs en la cité d'Argentine en Alemaigne » (214, ll. 24–25) qui avait une grande dévotion pour la Passion du Christ. Longtemps après sa mort, lors du transfert de son tombeau, on a découvert qu'il portait dans sa poitrine une croix formée par ses os (215, l. 2).

Ces légendes sur des saints dont la grande dévotion à la Passion a été récompensée par un miracle du « cœur inscrit » font penser aux pratiques d'Henri Suso qui raconte dans sa *Vie* avoir gravé sur sa poitrine

¹² Henri Suso, *Vie*, 13, in *Oeuvres complètes*, trans. Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache (Paris, 1977), 177.

¹³ Henri Suso, *Vie*, 16, in *Oeuvres complètes*, 183.

¹⁴ Voir Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, « La légende du cœur inscrit dans la littérature religieuse et didactique », in *Le « cuer » au Moyen Âge (Réalité et Senefiance)*, Senefiance, 30 (1991), 297–312. Voir aussi André Cabassut, « Coeurs (changement, échange des) », in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, t. 2 (Paris, 1953), 1046–51.

¹⁵ L'exemple tiré de l'ouvrage de Thomas de Cantimpré, *Bonum universale de apibus* (1256–1263), traduit en français en 1372, sur l'ordre de Charles V. Voir Philippe de Mézières, *Le Livre de la vertu*, 210–11, note 215.

le monogramme de Jésus, comme marque d'amour et d'appartenance. Il n'a pas hésité à se déchirer la chair avec un couteau : « O Seigneur, je te prie d'achever de t'imprimer plus avant au fond de mon coeur et de graver en moi ton nom sacré, de telle sorte que tu ne te sépares jamais de mon coeur¹⁶. »

Pourtant Philippe de Mézières, malgré les exemples des martyrs qu'il évoque, ne semble penser ni aux pratiques ascétiques ni mystiques. Le prieur dominicain était recompensé par un miracle du « coeur inscrit » non pas parce qu'il avait marqué sa chair avec un couteau comme Suso, mais parce qu'il avait eu l'habitude de faire le signe de croix sur sa poitrine (214, ll. 26–29). Ce n'est pas par hasard que Philippe, lorsqu'il encourage ses lectrices à suivre l'exemple du Christ, prend le soin de les avertir : « il n'est pas a entendre (...) que toutes les dames mariees se doient faire cruxifier, ensivant la voye de leur doulx Espoulz immortel, car la dame mariee puet bien parvenir finalement aus souveraines noces de l'Espoulx de son ame Jesu Crist, sans estre en sa char cruxifie » (272, ll. 1–6).

Dans son effort de graver la Passion dans le coeur humain Philippe de Mézières recommande aussi à ses lecteurs une prière latine, qu'il traduit aussitôt en français car il veut qu'elle soit compréhensible aux femmes mariées, à qui il s'adresse spécialement et qui pourraient ne pas comprendre le latin¹⁷ : « O bon Jhesu, veuillies escrire en mon cuer tes saintes playes de ton precieux sang a ce que je cognoisse tout ce qui me fait besoing et tout ce que j'ay a faire et que je puisse lirre, sentir et plainement entendre la dolour de ta sainte Passion et l'amour que tu as a nous, bon Jhesu » (214, ll. 17–21). Elle fait partie de sa collection de prières contenues dans le recueil conservé à la Bibliothèque Mazarine (MS 516). Cette prière, attribuée erronément à saint Bernard,

¹⁶ Henri Suso, *Vie*, IV, in *Oeuvres complètes*, 163. Dans le *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, Philippe de Mézières évoque une scène qui semble être une variante de cette stigmatisation : l'Amoureuse (Miséricorde) fait avec sa clé dorée une empreinte sur le coeur du jeune Moïse (Charles VI). Elle déboutonne sa tunique et fend sa chemise à l'emplacement de sa poitrine « si doulcement et par si grant mistere que l'emprainte de la dicte clef sans douleur perca la pel et les os jusques au coeur, qui se trova tout ouvert. Et lors au cuer du jeune Moïse couronne furent representez par grant compassion toutes les tribulacions, maladies, pauvreté et meschiefz de tous les pauvres de la nef francoise et de toute la Crestiente. » Voir Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin*, ed. George William Coopland, (Cambridge, 1969), 2 : 463, chap. 297.

¹⁷ « O bone Jhesu, scribe in corde meo vulnera tua preciosissimo sanguine tuo ut simper cognoscam quid desit michi legam, senciam et intelligam dolorem et amorem tuum, bone Jhesu » (214, ll. 7–9).

semble avoir des origines mystiques. Elle se retrouve notamment dans les écrits de la mystique allemande, Gertrude d'Helfta, (1256–1302) qui dans ses *Révélations* avoue l'avoir trouvée dans un livre¹⁸. Elle ressemble étrangement aussi à une des prières contenues dans un recueil apocryphe des *Quinze oraisons* de Brigitte de Suède (1303–1373)¹⁹.

La récitation de cette prière devait être particulièrement chère à Philippe de Mézières car, comme le rappelle Joan B. Williamson, elle se trouve dans un grand nombre de ses écrits: placée au début de la lettre au Roi Richard II, elle est contenue dans l'*Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, et dans *La Sustance de la Chevalerie*²⁰. Philippe conseille la pratique de cette prière plusieurs fois dans *Le Livre de la vertu*. Il souhaite qu'elle s'accompagne d'un signe de croix fait avec le pouce sur la poitrine. Cette pratique modeste et simple, ce geste facile et indolore doivent laisser son empreinte sur chaque moment de la vie humaine, s'inscrire dans le quotidien:

Ainsi ceste petite oroison (...) par especial se doit dire au matin quant on se lieve, quant on se couche, alant a table, levant de table, quant on se veult confesser et communier, quant on se met au chemin, quant on est en grant peril et a grant destresse, en toutes doubttes et en toutes ayses et en toutes necessités et briefment en tous fais corporelz, temporelz et spirituelz et finalement a la mort. (213, ll. 33–34 et 214, ll. 1–4)

¹⁸ «Scribe, misericordissime Domine, vulera tua in corde meo pretioso sanguine tuo, ut in eis legam tuum dolorem pariter et amorem et vulnerum turum memoria iugiter in secreto cordis mei permaneat, ut dolor compassionis tuae in me excitetur et ardor dilectionis tuae in me accendatur» [Seigneur d'infinie miséricorde, inscrivez de votre sang précieux vos blessures en mon cœur pour qu'elles m'y fassent lire à la fois votre souffrance et votre amour—pour que ne s'y endorme point a douleur de la compassion qui vous est due—our que ne s'y éteigne point la fièvre de l'amour]. Voir Gertrude la Grande, *Le héraut*, II, IV, ed. and trans. Pierre Doyère, in *Oeuvres spirituelles*, t. II (Paris, 1968), 242–43.

¹⁹ La douzième oraison: «Scribe, quaeso, o pie Iesu, omnia vulnera tua in corde meo pretiosissimo Sanguine tuo, ut in illis legam dolorem tuum et mortem, ut in gratiarum actione usque in finem iugiter perseverem» [Je vous conjure, O mon Sauveur, de marquer avec votre précieux Sang toutes vos plaies dans mon cœur, afin que j'y lise sans cesse votre douleur et votre amour]. En réalité il s'agit d'un ouvrage apocryphe, car le recueil a été rédigé en Angleterre, vers la fin du XIV^e siècle. Voir André Wilmart, «Le grand poème bonaventurien sur les sept paroles du Christ en croix», *Revue bénédictine* 47 (1935), 274–77.

²⁰ Joan B. Williamson, «The Image of the Book in the Works of Philippe de Mézières», *Romance Languages Annual* 4 (1992), 181.

PHILIPPE EST-IL UN MYSTIQUE ?

Nous avons vu que dans sa démonstration de l'analogie entre la Passion et le mariage Philippe reprend souvent les images, les métaphores propres aux récits des mystiques. Certains commentateurs de son oeuvre seraient prêts de voir en lui un auteur spirituel. Joan B. Williamson prétend même que l'écriture a pour lui une dimension mystique²¹. Selon elle « Philippe the writer uses the imagery of writing to develop the *topos* of naming the unnameable, or as Curtius terms it, the ineffable²². » Or il est vrai que Philippe fait assez souvent allusion à l'imperfection de son écriture, il avoue aussi son impuissance devant la matière qu'il ose aborder : « gros, vilain, rude et simple escripvain » (190, l. 7). Il se plaint de son manque de talent et de l'insuffisance de son style : « des divins sacremens de mariage esprituel en cestui livre prolixement et grossement traittiés » (401, ll. 8–9), il déplore son écriture « prolix et rude » (196, l. 32) « povre » et « foible » (384, l. 2, 7). Mais cette insuffisance formelle ou le discrédit de la forme, comme le dit Roland Barthes en commentant les écrits spirituels d'Ignace de Loyola, ne sert-elle pas à « exalter l'importance du fond²³ ? » Il faudrait donc lire les jugements de Philippe comme un avertissement : la vraie écriture est celle qui est gravée dans le coeur. Là où Barthes dit : « la littérature, dont la fonction est mondaine, n'est pas compatible avec la spiritualité²⁴ », Philippe de Mézières évoque les paroles de Bernard de Clairvaux à propos des livres : « Se je n'y treuve Jhesu, voire cruxifié, je n'y pren point de gout ne de savour » (206, ll. 27–28)²⁵. Il n'ignore pas qu' « on ne peut être à la fois saint et écrivain²⁶. »

Néanmoins malgré la référence constante aux thèmes et au langage mystique nous avons pu voir que le projet de Philippe n'est pas d'inscrire les pratiques dévotes ni l'idée du mariage transformé par la guérison spirituelle dans la quête des expériences mystiques. La

²¹ *Ibid.*, 180.

²² *Ibid.*, 179.

²³ Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* (Paris, 1971), 45.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 45–46.

²⁵ *Sermon*, 15.3.6 : « Si scribas, non sapit mihi, nisi legero ibi Iesum » [Tes écrits n'ont pour moi aucune saveur si je n'y lis le nom de Jésus]. Voir Bernard de Clairvaux, *Sermons sur le cantique*, t. 1, trans. Raffaele Fassetta, in *Oeuvres complètes (latin-français)*, éd. Jean Leclercq, Henri Rochais et Charles Hugh Talbot, (Sources chrétiennes) (Paris, 2006), 338–39.

²⁶ Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, 46.

rémemoration de la Passion, l'effort de graver le nom du Christ dans le cœur sont, selon Philippe, des voies à suivre, à imiter mais le degré et l'intensité de cette activité ne doit pas se confondre avec la jubilation ou l'extase mystique. L'exemple qu'il livre d'un franciscain « frere meneu », son contemporain illustre très bien son attitude. Le souvenir des souffrances de Jésus produisait chez le moine un tel ravissement qu'il demeurerait insensible pendant une heure « que pour bouter ne pour tirer, ne poindre le d'aguiilles, on ne le pooit esveiller ne remuer jusques atant que le vision fut passee » (381, ll. 25–26). Philippe semble admirer le visionnaire mais lui-même en est incapable : « je ressamble le phisicien grief malade qui donne a autrui medecine et ne le scet prendre pour lui » (382, ll. 11–12).

Vu l'ampleur de ses projets politiques et religieux, vu la complexité de ses idées et de ses rêves, je dirais malgré tout que Philippe reste un maximaliste modéré. Comme preuve j'aimerais évoquer sa relation avec cette sainte femme. Il serait tentant de voir dans cette sainte femme une inspiratrice de Philippe. On sait que parmi les manuscrits qui lui appartenaient et qui se trouvent aujourd'hui à la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal à Paris (MS 1073), il y a un certain nombre des écrits brigittins : notamment une *Vie de sainte Brigitte* latine et d'assez longs extraits des *Révélations*²⁷. Ce n'est pas pourtant elle qui devient une de ces femmes-modèles dont il parle dans son livre, celles qui ont délaissé l'amour charnel et terrestre pour devenir les épouses du Christ. Il préfère de parler de la bienheureuse Delphine (223–24) dont la vie et le récit des miracles se trouvent—quel paradoxe—dans le même recueil des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, à côté des textes brigittins²⁸. André Vauchez qui analyse le phénomène de la faible diffusion des *Révélations* de sainte Brigitte en France, voit les causes de ce rejet surtout dans les raisons politiques²⁹. Mais cette réponse éclaire-t-elle

²⁷ Le livre VIII (*Liber celestis imperatoris ad imperatorem et reges terranos*) et des extraits du livre IV constitués surtout des prophéties relatives à l'Église romaine.

²⁸ Dauphine de Puimichel (+ 1360), épouse du comte Elzéar de Sabran, canonisé en 1369 par le pape Urbain V. Voir André Vauchez, *La Sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge d'après les procès de canonisation et les documents hagiographiques* (Rome, 1988), 94, 475–77, 616–18. Voir aussi Anna Loba, « Exemple au service de la spiritualité conjugale : les couples royaux dans *Le Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage* de Philippe de Mézières », *Studia Romanica Posnaniensia* 35 (2008), 83–92.

²⁹ André Vauchez, « La faible diffusion des *Révélations* de sainte Brigitte dans l'espace français : les causes d'un rejet », in idem, *Saints, prophètes et visionnaires : le pouvoir surnaturel au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1999), 162–74. Cette hypothèse semble confirmée aussi par le fait que dans le *Songe du Vieil Pelerin* Philippe de Mézières évoque le per-

sufisamment les rapports entre Mézières et la visionnaire suédoise? Philippe qui se montre comme un esprit vif mais plutôt pratique et porté vers l'action n'est-il pas repoussé par le mysticisme trop affiché, trop impossible de Brigitte?

Puisque nous sommes à Chypre, il faudrait rappeler que c'est aussi le lieu d'une rencontre manquée entre Brigitte et Philippe³⁰. L'attitude de Philippe à l'égard du mariage et de la Passion, sa vision de l'imitation de Jésus-Christ ne font-elles pas de cette rencontre probable ou improbable une rencontre toujours ratée?

sonnage de Marie Robine, une autre femme visionnaire qui a prophétisé pendant le Grand Schisme. Cette évocation semble être aussi dictée par des raisons uniquement politiques. D'après la relation de Philippe, Marie était venue à Avignon dans l'espoir d'être guérie sur le tombeau de Pierre de Luxembourg. Le pape Clement VII aurait assisté lui-même à la guérison de Marie et ce miracle aurait contribué à consolider sa légitimité aux yeux de ceux qui en doutaient encore (Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 1 : 373-74, chap. 64). Voir Matthew Tobin, « Le Livre des révélations de Marie Robine († 1399). Étude et édition », in *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen-Âge, Temps modernes* 98 : 1 (1986) 232-33.

³⁰ Sainte Brigitte s'est arrêté à Chypre deux fois, en avril et en octobre 1372, lors de son voyage en Terre Sainte. Elle a visité Famaguste et Nicosie, s'est entretenue avec la reine Eléonore et donné des enseignements au peuple de l'île. Voir Catherine de Flavigny, *Sainte Brigitte de Suède, sa vie, ses révélations et son œuvre* (Paris, 1910), 507-15; 558-65.

A SOLDIER AND A DIPLOMAT

PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES ET LES RÉPUBLIQUES MARITIMES ITALIENNES

Michel Balard

«Ce peuple génois, nommé pervers par tous ses voisins...devrait être rayé de la carte du monde et totalement dispersé», écrivait entre autres aménités Philippe de Mézières dans *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, tandis qu'il réservait son admiration à la cité de la Lagune, «une des plus nobles et des plus libres villes qui soient au monde...la Dame des eaux, l'extraordinaire ville de Venise¹.» Le contraste entre les deux républiques maritimes italiennes a été maintes fois souligné, mais jamais autant de haine pour l'une et d'éloge pour l'autre ne se trouvent exprimés avec autant de force que dans les œuvres de Philippe de Mézières². D'où vient tant de passion? Le «très indigne chancelier» du roi de Chypre, comme il se qualifiait lui-même, avait-il eu mainte occasion de se défier de l'une et d'admirer l'autre? Les appréciations qu'il porte sur les deux communes italiennes dans ses trois ouvrages majeurs, la *Vie de Pierre Thomas*, *Le songe du vieil pelerin* et l'*Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, mises en relation avec les différents épisodes d'une carrière mouvementée, devraient permettre de comprendre l'attitude de l'«infime chevalier picard» autre qualificatif de lui-même, à l'égard des communes italiennes, et ce qu'il attendait d'elles pour l'organisation du passage outre-mer, préoccupation essentielle de son existence.

Avait-il une connaissance précise et personnelle de ces deux villes? En ce qui concerne Gênes, deux faits méritent d'être relevés. Dès son arrivée en Chypre, à la fin de 1347 ou au début de 1348, Philippe de Mézières, qui se met au service du roi Hugues IV, a nécessairement des contacts avec les communautés occidentales établies dans l'île, et en particulier avec les Génois qui, quelques années auparavant, étaient entrés en conflit avec le souverain et avaient cherché, sans succès, à

¹ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, éd. G. W. Coopland (abrégé *Vieil Pelerin*) 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1969), 1 : 296, chap. 39; *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, trad. Joël Blanchard (abrégé *Songe*) (Paris, 2008), 246, chap. 39; *Vieil Pelerin*, 1 : 254, chap. 22; *Songe*, 197, chap. 22; *Vieil Pelerin*, 2 : 421, chap. 281; *Songe*, 899, chap. 281.

² Roberto S. Lopez, «Venise et Gênes: deux styles, une réussite», in Idem, *Su e giù per la storia di Genova* (Gênes, 1975), 35–42.

élargir les privilèges que le roi Henri 1^{er} leur avait concédés en 1232. Ainsi en 1344, les Génois avaient-ils insisté pour obtenir le droit d'entrer dans les ports chypriotes sans autorisation préalable des officiers royaux, pour avoir leur propre prison en Chypre et le droit de cuire le pain dans le four de leur colonie de Famagouste³. Les tensions entre les officiers royaux et les autorités génoises établies dans l'île, ainsi qu'entre les membres des deux communautés rivales, vénitienne et génoise, ne pouvaient échapper à l'attention de Philippe de Mézières.

Devenu chancelier du roi Pierre 1^{er} en 1360, il élargit par ses voyages sa connaissance du milieu génois. Il accompagne en effet son souverain à Gênes à la fin janvier 1363. L'annaliste Giorgio Stella nous décrit en effet l'accueil fastueux qui fut réservé à Pierre 1^{er} par le doge Simone Boccanegra. Près de 10.000 livres de Gênes furent dépensées par Paolo Giustiniani, chargé de l'accueil du roi. Reçu dans la maison de campagne de Pietro Malocello à Sturla, Pierre 1^{er} fut témoin d'une révolution de palais au cours de laquelle le doge, empoisonné lors d'un délicieux banquet, fut remplacé par Gabriele Adorno, qui, bien que moins favorable aux intérêts chypriotes, obtint néanmoins du roi le 5 mars 1363 le renouvellement du traité de 1232. Philippe de Mézières est alors témoin de l'acte⁴. Il ne semble pas avoir goûté la beauté de la Riviera, puisqu'il fait dire à Ardent Désir et à sa sœur Bonne Espérance : « Quittez vite cette mauvaise riviera, cernée de montagnes farouches et orgueilleuses, peuplées de Guelfes, de Gibelins et d'ennemis de saint Pierre⁵. »

Une seconde expérience fut encore moins heureuse. L'on sait par la *Vie de Saint Pierre Thomas* qu'en janvier 1365 le roi de Chypre désigna deux ambassadeurs, le légat du pape Pierre Thomas et Guy de Bagneul pour négocier la paix avec Gênes, alors que de violents incidents avaient éclaté entre les autorités chypriotes et le podestat génois en Chypre au

³ George Hill, *A History of Cyprus* (Cambridge, 1948), 2: 289–290; Geo Pistarino, «Maona e mercanti genovesi a Cipro», in Idem, *Genovesi d'Oriente* (Gênes, 1990), 426–27.

⁴ G. et I. Stella, *Annales genuenses*, éd. Giovanna Petti Balbi, RIS2, XVII/2 (Bologne, 1975), 157; *Liber Iurium Reipublicae Genuensis*, Monumenta Historiae Patriae, 2: 719–23; Louis de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1852–1861), 2: 248–49; Nicolae Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières 1327–1405 et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (1896, réimpr. Londres, 1973), 150–52; Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), 155; Theodore Papadopoulos, éd., *Ιστορία της Κύπρου* (Nicosie, 1995), 4, 76.

⁵ *Vieil Pelerin* 2: 302, chap. 248; *Songe*, 253, chap. 248.

cours de l'année 1364 : désertion et punition corporelle de deux marins génois d'un bateau chypriote, assassinat d'autres marins par des mercenaires siciliens au service du roi, altercation entre le podestat génois et deux officiers royaux, tous ces incidents poussaient la Commune de Gênes à des préparatifs militaires contre Chypre et à ordonner pour février 1365 le départ de tous les Génois de l'île, alors même que Pierre 1^{er} poursuivait son voyage en Occident pour préparer sa croisade. Les envoyés du roi furent très mal reçus à Gênes ; à leur entrée dans la ville on leur jeta des pierres, on poussa des cris de guerre contre Chypre. Le légat eut du mal à trouver refuge dans une église des Hospitaliers, sans doute la commanderie de San Giovanni di Prè⁶. Après de longues négociations et une intervention du pape auprès du doge, un traité fut finalement signé le 18 avril 1365, qui élargit les franchises juridictionnelles et commerciales des citoyens génois en Chypre⁷. Lors de ces événements, il n'est pas fait mention de Philippe de Mézières lui-même, mais dans un court passage celui-ci évoque les menaces de mort que la foule lui aurait adressées lors de son séjour à Gênes⁸. Dans la mesure où l'on ne connaît aucun autre voyage du chancelier en Ligurie, il ne peut s'agir que de cette même mission de 1365, au cours de laquelle l'auteur a dû probablement accompagner son ami et maître, le légat Pierre Thomas.

Contrastant avec ces deux brefs voyages à Gênes, les séjours de Philippe de Mézières à Venise sont plus nombreux et plus durables. S'il n'est pas certain qu'il ait visité la lagune dès 1345, alors qu'il fait son apprentissage des armes auprès du duc de Milan, Luchino Visconti, ni qu'il ait suivi l'expédition d'Humbert II du Viennois, qui traverse l'Italie de la Toscane à Venise, avant de gagner Nègrepont, il arrive à Venise dans la suite de Pierre 1^{er} le 5 décembre 1361 et s'enthousiasme tout de suite « pour la plus triomphante cité qu'il ait jamais vue », comme le dit Commynes un siècle plus tard, pour la « merveilleuse cité de Venise... qui aime le bon sens et la justice⁹. » Il en décrit d'abord la

⁶ Joachim Smet, éd., *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas by Philippe de Mézières* (Rome, 1954), 122–23.

⁷ *Liber Iurium Reipublicae Genuensis*, 2: 733–43; Louis de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre*, 2: 254–66; Nicolas Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 256–64; Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 155.

⁸ « et mortem propriam in Janua quociens vidit », cf. Smet, éd., *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas*, 123 et Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 246.

⁹ Philippe Contamine, « Guerre et paix à la fin du Moyen Âge : l'action et la pensée de Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405) », in Hans-Henning Kortüm, éd., *Krieg im*

situation : « site extraordinaire, au milieu de la mer, à environ une lieue de la terre ferme... dans un endroit protégé. » Puis il évoque son bon gouvernement, dont il décrit les rouages, sans faire aucune erreur sur les institutions. À leur tête le doge, assisté de « six hommes âgés de la noblesse » — entendons par là le Petit Conseil, formé d'un représentant de chacun des six sestiers dont la ville est divisée. Viennent ensuite les Quarante, formant une cour d'appel et préparant la législation en matière de monnaie et de finance, puis, dit le chancelier, « pour les affaires importantes, cent cinquante personnes » dans lesquelles il faut voir les membres du Sénat et « pour les très importantes, il y a mille gentilshommes, par qui le bien commun de la seigneurie est gouverné en permanence » : entendons par là le Grand Conseil, centre du pouvoir au XIII^e siècle, mais qui, au fil du temps, s'est élargi et a délégué une grande partie de ses compétences au Sénat¹⁰. A cette description précise des institutions vénitiennes, Philippe de Mézières ajoute un jugement attestant son attachement à la tradition : Venise a risqué sa perte du jour où « des hommes jeunes, pleins de colère et de sang, ont pris le dessus dans la seigneurie contre l'avis des anciens. » Est-ce une allusion à la conjuration de Bajamonte Tiepolo (1311) que Philippe de Mézières n'a pu connaître que par ouï-dire, ou plutôt au ressentiment d'une partie de la population envers l'excessive concentration des pouvoirs, à la veille de la guerre de Chioggia, qui allait constituer du vivant du chancelier le plus sévère test de la cohésion de la société vénitienne et de la force de ses institutions¹¹ ?

D'autres motifs d'admiration envers Venise s'expriment dans les œuvres du chancelier. La puissance de sa flotte d'abord, qui n'est jamais utilisée pour la course, considérée comme un vol, mais seulement contre les ennemis de la république, à la différence de ce que font les autres cités maritimes, telle Gênes dont on verra un doge-archevêque, Paolo Fregoso, prendre la mer et s'emparer de tous les bâtiments à sa portée, fussent-ils ceux de ses compatriotes¹². Au contraire, Venise équipe chaque année des galères pour la protection de son commerce

Mittelalter (Berlin, 2001), 183 ; expressions reprises par Joël Blanchard dans sa traduction française du *Songe du vieux pèlerin*, 13 et 14.

¹⁰ Frederic C. Lane, *Venice, a Maritime Republic*, 3e éd. (Baltimore, 1981), 87-117.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, 189.

¹² *Vieil pèlerin*, 1 : 254, chap. 22 ; *Songe*, 198, chap. 22 ; sur la piraterie à Gênes, voir Jacques Heers, *Gênes au XV^e siècle. Activité économique et problèmes sociaux* (Paris, 1961), 306 et Michel Balard, « Course et piraterie à Gênes à la fin du Moyen Âge », in

et la surveillance de la mer. Philippe de Mézières rappelle également la participation des Vénitiens aux croisades, «au service de Dieu et de sa religion», ainsi que le rôle actif qu'ils prirent dans la conquête de Constantinople en 1204, face «aux Grecs schismatiques et rebelles à l'autorité de l'Église de Rome», pour reprendre ses propres expressions¹³. Il loue enfin l'organisation des finances et du crédit, qui repose sur la confiance de la population et sur la transparence des affaires, au point qu'un registre suffit à faire voir «tout l'état (financier) de la ville de Venise.» Le discours du doge Tommaso Mocenigo illustrera ce point quinze ans après la mort du chancelier¹⁴. Celui-ci préconise également pour combattre l'usure des prêteurs juifs l'organisation d'une sorte de crédit municipal, dont il a pu connaître le modèle, peut-être à Venise, plus sûrement à Sienne, où se préparait la fondation du «Monte dei Paschi di Siena¹⁵.»

En dehors du premier voyage de 1361, Philippe de Mézières eut de nombreuses opportunités pour mieux connaître la cité des doges. Pendant deux années (1363–1364), au service de son roi et de l'Église, il fait d'incessants voyages entre Venise et Avignon, passe par Milan pour négocier la paix entre Bernabò Visconti et la papauté, représentée par son légat en Italie, le cardinal Albornoz. Le 20 octobre 1363 on retrouve le chancelier de Chypre à Venise, d'où il repart pour Avignon, avant de revenir en février 1364, pour essayer de convaincre les Vénitiens de participer à la ligue promue par Urbain V contre les Turcs. Les réticences des Vénitiens, occupés à réduire la rébellion de la Crète, sont vaincues par l'éloquence de Pierre Thomas et du chancelier, au terme de quarante jours de longues discussions avec le doge et son conseil: ceux-ci offrent au roi de Chypre des vaisseaux, des armes et des provisions pour 2000 chevaliers pendant trois mois, la moitié à leurs frais, la moitié à ceux du roi¹⁶. Sitôt l'accord conclu, Philippe de Mézières repart pour Milan et il est vraisemblable qu'il accompagne son souverain dans sa tournée en Europe, puisqu'on ne le retrouve à Venise qu'à la fin de l'automne 1364. Il y reste jusqu'au départ de l'expédition de Pierre 1^{er} vers Rhodes et vers Alexandrie, le 27 juin 1365.

Gonçal Lopez Nadal, éd., *VIII Jornades d'Estudis Històrics Locals: El comerç alternatiu, Corsarisme i contraban (ss. XV–XVIII)* (Palma de Majorque, 1990), 29–40.

¹³ *Vieil pelerin*, 1: 254 et 256, chap. 22; *Songe*, 198 et 200, chap. 22.

¹⁴ *Vieil pelerin*, 1: 460–461, chap. 89; *Songe*, 387–89, chap. 89; cf. Frederic C. Lane, *Venice, a Maritime Republic*, 228–29.

¹⁵ *Vieil pelerin*, 1: 460–61, chap. 89; *Songe*, 387–88, chap. 89.

¹⁶ Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 236–41.

Après la piteuse retraite de l'armée chypriote du grand port égyptien, Pierre 1^{er} ne renonce en rien à ses projets de croisade, pour lesquels l'aide de l'Occident s'avère une fois de plus indispensable. En juin 1366, il envoie à nouveau son chancelier à Venise, où, dans des circonstances moins favorables, Philippe cherche à obtenir le concours des Vénitiens pour la nouvelle croisade projetée par le roi. Le doge Marco Corner, furieux du désastre des intérêts vénitiens en Egypte provoqué par l'expédition chypriote, cherchait plutôt à négocier avec le soudan qu'à organiser une nouvelle croisade. Philippe de Mézières court alors en Avignon et obtient du pape qu'il retire les privilèges accordés aux Vénitiens, aux Génois et aux Catalans pour commercer avec les Sarrasins (bulle du 17 août 1366). Pendant son séjour à la cour pontificale, puis au cours de voyages en Aragon, en Castille et au Portugal, le chancelier ne cesse d'écrire des lettres pleines d'enthousiasme pour la croisade et pour l'Ordre de la Passion, sa création, qui devait représenter le fer de lance de l'expédition. Il ne revient à Venise qu'à l'été 1367; il y rencontre Amédée VI de Savoie, à peine rentré de sa croisade à Constantinople et en Bulgarie, et repart pour Chypre en septembre, d'où il participe au raid de la flotte royale contre Tripoli. En mars 1368, enfin, il reprend le chemin de l'Occident, en accompagnant Pierre 1^{er} à Naples, à Rome, à Florence, puis dans les villes de la plaine padane, avant de retrouver Venise en août 1368. Pour des raisons peu claires, sinon pour s'opposer à la conclusion d'un accord de paix entre les républiques maritimes et le soudan, le chancelier demeure à Venise lorsque le roi de Chypre regagne son pays le 23 septembre 1368. La nouvelle de l'assassinat de Pierre 1^{er} (16 janvier 1369) l'atteint à Venise, où, découragé et ne pouvant rentrer en Chypre où sa vie serait en danger, il se retire au couvent des Verberés de Saint Jean l'Évangéliste, auquel il fait don d'un fragment de la Vraie Croix que lui avait confié Pierre Thomas (cérémonie du 23 décembre 1370). Bien que les relations se distendent avec Pierre II, il est choisi par le nouveau souverain pour complimenter Grégoire XI de son accession au pontificat et pour lui annoncer son couronnement. Lorsqu'il s'établit à Paris auprès de Charles V en 1373, Chypre, «le champ d'Alchedamach ou du sang» s'éloigne de ses pensées, alors que l'urgence d'organiser la croisade est à l'origine de ses principaux écrits, le *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, la *Lettre au roi Richard* et l'*Espître lamentable et consolatoire*. Qu'attend-il alors des deux républiques maritimes?

De Gênes, assurément pas grand chose, d'autant que les troubles ayant suivi le couronnement de Pierre II accroissent sa haine des

Génois, qui ont mené une expédition punitive contre Chypre, se sont emparé de Famagouste, en gage des indemnités imposées au roi, et ont emmené en Ligurie environ soixante-dix otages, dont Jacques de Lusignan, futur successeur au trône de Pierre II¹⁷. On ignore à quel moment et dans quelles circonstances Philippe de Mézières a pu connaître ces dramatiques événements, peut-être durant son séjour en Avignon où, à la fin de l'année 1372, arrivèrent à la curie les envoyés de Pierre II chargés de demander l'intervention du pape contre les Génois, qui préparaient une invasion de l'île¹⁸. Mais l'ancien chancelier se trouvait déjà à la cour de Charles V lorsque la flotte de Pietro Campofregoso vint à bout de la résistance des Chypriotes, auxquels furent imposées de lourdes indemnités par le traité du 21 octobre 1374¹⁹. L'écho de ces malheurs s'entend en de nombreux passages du *Le songe du vieil pelerin*. Les adjectifs qualifiant l'attitude des Génois en témoignent : peuple farouche, pervers (le mot est répété au moins quatre fois), mauvais, avide, affreux, maudit, cupide, qui a déployé « sa force guerrière, avec une cruauté totale, une totale trahison, une totale inhumanité, en violation de son serment, par une trahison manifeste s'est emparé du fort de Famagouste, de tous les chevaliers en armes et les emprisonna », manifestant « leur grand orgueil, outrecuidance et déplaisante vantardise », pour tenir par la force « contre Dieu et diable Famagouste qui est pour nos péchés une verge coupante de notre royaume tout entier », déclare la messagère de Chypre, venue dénoncer devant la reine Vérité la ruine de l'île par les Génois²⁰.

Philippe de Mézières les rend en effet responsables de tous les malheurs de Chypre, accrus par le traité du 19 février 1383 qui cède aux Génois la propriété de Famagouste et de deux lieues autour de la ville, et impose à Jacques I^{er} le versement de 852.000 florins en dix annuités à la Mahone génoise qui s'était formée pour financer l'expédition de Pietro di Campofregoso²¹. Le chancelier a sans aucun doute connu les

¹⁷ Récit de ces événements dans George Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 2 : 382–413 ; Peter W. Edbury, « Cyprus and Genoa : the Origins of the War of 1373–1374 », *Praktika tou deuterou Diethnous Kyprologikou Synedriou*, 2 vols. (Nicosie, 1986), 2 : 109–26 ; Idem, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 204–9.

¹⁸ Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 409.

¹⁹ Catherine Otten-Froux, « Les relations politico-financières de Gênes avec le royaume des Lusignan (1374–1460) », in Michel Balard et Alain Ducellier, eds., *Coloniser au Moyen Âge* (Paris 1995), 62–64.

²⁰ *Vieil Pelerin*, 1 : 295–99, chap. 39 ; *Songe*, 246–50, chap. 39 ; *Vieil Pelerin*, 1 : 295 et 298, chap. 39 ; *Songe*, 245 et 249, chap. 39.

²¹ Catherine Otten-Froux, « Les relations politico-financières », 65.

termes de l'accord, puisqu'il fait allusion aux « huit cent mille florins de biens de la Blanche Biche » dérobés par les Gênois : le parallélisme des deux chiffres est frappant. Aussi les reproches adressés aux Gênois se font cinglants : ils ont « servi et adoré au sein d'une confédération inique les vicaires de Mahomet en Égypte, en Syrie, Turquie, Barbarie et falsifié la religion de Jésus-Christ et de la chrétienté loyale », eux qui portent la « croix vermeille et le manteau de l'Agneau Sacrifié²². » Alors qu'au temps de Pierre 1^{er} Famagouste était florissante et voyait passer pour près de cent mille florins de marchandises chaque année en pierres précieuses, épices, draps d'or et de soie, que l'île constituait « la frontière puissante et indispensable de la chrétienté catholique », grâce aux exploits du roi contre les Infidèles, aujourd'hui, dit le narrateur, « dans la ville de Famagouste, à la place de ces richesses, poussent orties et ronces » et « dans le royaume de Chypre soumis à l'oppression tyrannique et à l'inhumaine rapacité des Gênois arborant la croix rouge sur fond blanc, le commerce est mort, les habitants sont devenus sauvages et semblent plus morts que vifs²³. » Il s'agit là de jugements sans doute excessifs, mais que viennent corroborer en partie les données chiffrées des douanes gênoises et le monopole imposé par Gênes aux navires étrangers astreints à relâcher à Famagouste, unique port de l'île ouvert au libre commerce d'importation et d'exportation²⁴. En conséquence, Catalans et Vénitiens évitent autant que possible l'étape chypriote, comme l'atteste la décision du Sénat vénitien d'interrompre la ligne de Chypre à partir de 1373 et jusqu'en 1444²⁵.

Philippe de Mézières aurait-il pu s'entremettre pour éviter de telles catastrophes ? On sait qu'en 1381 Federico Cornaro, qui avait de grandes propriétés à Piskopi, intervint auprès du chancelier retiré aux Célestins de Paris pour que le royaume de Chypre soit compris dans le traité en cours de négociations entre Gênes et Venise, à l'issue de la guerre de Chioggia. Le 28 février 1382, Philippe répond à son ami en faisant valoir son incapacité à intervenir et en niant les dispositions

²² *Vieil Pelerin*, 1 : 297–98, chap. 39 ; *Songe*, 248, chap. 39 ; *Vieil Pelerin*, 1 : 296, chap. 39 ; *Songe*, 247, chap. 39.

²³ *Vieil Pelerin*, 1 : 298–99, chap. 39 et 2 : 419, chap. 281 ; *Songe*, 249, chap. 39 et 896–97, chap. 281.

²⁴ John Day, *Les douanes de Gênes 1376–1377*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1963), 1 : xxi et Michel Balard, « Les Gênois dans le royaume médiéval de Chypre », in Idem, *Les marchands italiens à Chypre* (Nicosie, 2007), 67–68 et 79.

²⁵ Doris Stöckly, *Le système de l'Incanto des galées du marché à Venise (fin XIII^e–milieu XV^e siècle)* (Leiden, 1985), 124–25.

pacifiques des Génois à l'égard de Chypre. De fait, Pierre II fut écarté des négociations au terme desquelles le traité de Turin du 8 août 1381 reconnaissait les droits spécifiques de Gênes en Chypre²⁶. La croisade demeurait l'unique préoccupation du chancelier. Malgré sa haine des Génois, il reconnaissait leur puissance navale, dont ses projets devaient nécessairement tenir compte. Aussi pour préparer le « passage général » des croisés outre-mer, le roi de France devrait requérir « le conseil et l'aide de la noble ville de Venise et de la puissante ville de Gênes, qui sont fortes et très habiles sur mer et capables de livrer des navires en nombre suffisant²⁷. » C'était déjà le projet de croisade proposé par Grégoire XI en 1374, qui associait Venise et Gênes au roi de Hongrie, au royaume de Sicile et aux Hospitaliers de Rhodes²⁸. Le succès de la croisade commandait au chancelier d'oublier ses rancœurs et de recourir aux deux républiques maritimes.

Tout en privilégiant Venise, choisie dans *Le songe du vieil pelerin* comme l'un des points de départ de l'expédition projetée, Philippe de Mézières ne se faisait guère d'illusion sur l'enthousiasme des Vénitiens pour la croisade. On le remarque tout particulièrement dans les mois qui ont suivi la retraite d'Alexandrie. Les destructions et le butin enlevé par l'armée chypriote en octobre 1365 provoquent la consternation à Venise, inquiète pour l'avenir de ses activités commerciales²⁹. Alors que Pierre 1^{er} s'apprêtait en 1366 à reprendre la mer contre les Infidèles, Venise envoyait des ambassadeurs auprès du sultan dès le 29 janvier 1366, pour l'assurer des dispositions pacifiques du roi de Chypre et intervenait auprès de ce dernier pour que sa nouvelle expédition s'en prenne aux émirs turcs d'Asie Mineure et non à Beyrouth, où les intérêts commerciaux vénitiens étaient prépondérants³⁰. Lors de son intervention auprès du doge et de ses conseils en juin 1366, Philippe de Mézières comprend que pour ses hôtes la croisade passe après la reprise des relations commerciales avec l'Égypte. Aussi intervient-il auprès d'Urbain V pour que Génois, Vénitiens et Catalans ne bénéficient plus des licences pontificales de commerce avec les Sarrasins. En

²⁶ *Liber Iurium*, 2: 858–906; Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 450–51.

²⁷ *Vieil Pelerin*, 2: 435, chap. 284; *Songe*, 913, chap. 284.

²⁸ Philippe de Mézières, *Une Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, Philippe Contamine et Jacques Paviot, éd. (Paris, 2008), 56.

²⁹ Willelm Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au Moyen Age*, 2 vols. (1885–1886, réimpr. Amsterdam, 1967), 2: 52–53.

³⁰ M.L. de Mas Latrie, éd., *La prise d'Alexandrie de Guillaume de Machaut* (1877, réimpr. Famagouste, 1974), 114 et 282, note 27.

octobre 1368, il se réjouit de l'échec des négociations entreprises par les ambassadeurs des deux communes italiennes auprès du soudan et exprime l'espoir de voir celles-ci rejoindre les forces chypriotes dans une nouvelle expédition. Obstiné dans ses projets de croisade, Pierre 1^{er} ne consentait à la paix avec l'Égypte qu'à des conditions impossibles, telle la restitution à la chrétienté du royaume de Jérusalem. Après son assassinat, les ambassadeurs génois et vénitiens obtinrent finalement la conclusion d'un traité en novembre ou décembre 1370 et la levée de la prohibition décrétée par le pape Urbain V³¹. Philippe de Mézières voyait s'éloigner les perspectives d'une nouvelle croisade contre l'Égypte.

Pour la relancer, il compte sur l'organisation de son ordre de chevalerie de la Passion de Jésus-Christ, pour lequel il écrit de nombreux textes en 1384, 1389–1394 et 1396³². Les républiques maritimes n'en sont point absentes, en particulier Venise³³. Dans *Le songe du vieil pelelerin*, l'auteur recommande au roi de France, qui dirigera l'expédition, de recourir aux taforesses vénitiennes, vaisseau qui coûte le quart du prix d'une galère armée et peut transporter de seize à vingt chevaux. Il reprend le même thème dans l'*Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, écrite début 1397, aux lendemains de la défaite des croisés à Nicopolis, alors qu'une escadre vénitienne avait remonté le Danube pour leur venir en aide³⁴. Pour récupérer les prisonniers aux mains des Turcs, on devra choisir des intermédiaires vénitiens ou des marchands italiens habitués à commercer avec les Turcs, plutôt que des négociateurs français qui connaissent moins les Ottomans³⁵. Une fois la nouvelle chevalerie constituée, celle de la Passion de Jésus-Christ, elle devra gagner tout droit Venise pour attaquer la Turquie par mer : dans son optimisme, Philippe de Mézières envisage le départ de près de cent mille hommes ayant choisi la voie maritime pour aller combattre les Infidèles. Il en sera de même pour les chevaliers recrutés en France, en Angleterre, en

³¹ Willelm Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, 2: 56–57; Eliyahu Ashtor, *The Levant Trade in the later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1983), 101–2.

³² Philippe Contamine, « Guerre et paix », op. cit., 186; Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades. From Lyons to Alcazar 1274–1580* (Oxford, 1992), 74; Jacques Paviot, *Les ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l'Orient* (Paris, 2003), 29–30.

³³ *Vieil Pelerin*, 2: 435, chap. 284; *Songe*, 913–14, chap. 284.

³⁴ Philippe Contamine, « La Consolation de la desconfiture de Hongrie de Philippe de Mézières », in *Nicopolis, 1396–1996. Annales de Bourgogne*, 68/3 (1996), 35–47; Jacques Paviot, *Les ducs de Bourgogne*, 38–40.

³⁵ Philippe de Mézières, *Une Epistre lamentable*, 174–75; cf. Jean Richard, « Les prisonniers de Nicopolis », *Nicopolis, 1396–1996*, 75–83.

Écosse et en Italie³⁶. C'était là faire une confiance excessive aux forces de Venise et à la volonté de ses dirigeants de participer à la croisade.

Au terme d'une carrière bien remplie, animée par l'unique préoccupation de la lutte contre les Infidèles, Philippe de Mézières pouvait méditer sur ses échecs dans ses relations avec les républiques maritimes italiennes. «Moraliste morose et utopiste retardataire», comme le qualifie Philippe Contamine, il pensait ranger la chevalerie occidentale sous la bannière de l'ordre qu'il avait créé; s'adonner à «l'initiation laborieuse du jeune roi Charles VI pour qu'il conduise à Jérusalem la nef française», comme le dit Alphonse Dupront; et obtenir le concours sans réserve de ceux, Génois et Vénitiens, qui détenaient les clefs de la mer³⁷. Mais pour les deux communes italiennes, l'idéal de la croisade allait mourir avec le siècle; Turcs et Mamlûks étaient pour elles moins des ennemis de la foi que des partenaires en affaires qu'il convenait de ménager et non de combattre. Comment en effet entrer en guerre contre des pays qui accueillaient les marchands italiens dans des fondouks prospères, dont l'activité était indispensable aux deux partenaires, chrétiens et musulmans? Faute de l'avoir compris, l'utopie de Philippe de Mézières s'est brisée sur le réalisme des deux républiques maritimes italiennes.

³⁶ Philippe de Mézières, *Une Epistre lamentable*, 188.

³⁷ Philippe Contamine, «Guerre et paix», 195; mais l'auteur nuance ce jugement dans Idem, «La crise de la royauté française au XIV^e siècle: réformation et innovation dans le *Songe du Vieil Pelerin* (1389) de Philippe de Mézières», in Hans-Joachim Schmidt, éd., *Tradition, Innovation, Invention. Fortschrittsverweigerung und Fortschrittsbewusstsein im Mittelalter* (Berlin-New York, 2005), 378. Alphonse Dupront, *Le mythe de croisade*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1997), 1: 257.

PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES AND THE MILITARY HISTORY OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

John France

*Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will
turn unto you!*

Zechariah 1:3

This dramatic exhortation was the heart of the vision of Christ reported by the priest Stephen Valentine as the army of the First Crusade faced its gravest crisis during the second siege of Antioch.¹ It was subsequently reiterated in many forms before the final capture of Jerusalem on 15 July 1099. This slogan dramatises and encapsulates one of the continuing realities of the crusade, that it was a religious exercise, and that setting things right in this world was inseparably connected with the achievement of personal virtue. In this sense Philippe de Mézières' dramatic conversion at Jerusalem was very much in the tradition of the crusade and in his appeal for a new religious order he cried out that: "Jerusalem, the first foundation of our Catholic faith, because of our sins God allows to the enjoyment of the children of Hagar, the sons of the chambermaid, so that the wicked Hagarenes and Saracens live in this sacred place where Christ's blood was shed."² This, of course, was the reason for the remarkable emphasis on the spiritual in his plan for a crusading "Order of the Passion." Its very name distinguished it from the many other secular orders founded at this time. His master, Peter I of Cyprus (1359–69), founded the Order of the Sword while the French king established the Order of the Star whose members died in disproportionate numbers at Poitiers in 1356. Philippe's knights were to form an elite, the inspired and driving force of the crusade and consequent defence of the Holy Land, distinguished by their spiritual devotion. On the other hand, in a clear recognition

¹ John Hugh and Laurita Hill, eds., *Le "Liber" de Raymond d'Aguilers* (Paris, 1969), 73.

² Abdel Hamid Hamdy, ed., "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Alexandria, Egypt* 18 (1964), 76. My own rather free translation.

of the conditions, which would allow the recruitment of a large order, they were not monks like the Hospitallers. Indeed, they could be married, they retained and transmitted property, and could enjoy some of their income.³ I must confess that when I first came across Philippe it was this notion of an order that made his work much less interesting than, for example, Marino Sanudo Torsello's *Book of the Secrets of the Faithful of the Cross* which I found a much more impressive work.⁴ The order, with its remarkable spiritual emphasis, seemed to me much less realistic and striking than Sanudo's practicality.

In a sense Philippe's ideas seemed much more conventional. From the first, Urban II had seen the crusade as a solution to the fragmentation of the West. This was an important theme in Philippe's writings, but it was one which merely expressed a common sentiment that the crusade could act as a cure for all the ills of Christendom and particularly the moral decay of its ruling classes, which he emphasized in his *Le songe du vieil pelerin*.⁵ In the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, for example, the great king is prevented from conquering Jerusalem by the outbreak of division and rebellion led by Mordred.⁶ I tended to dismiss Philippe's whole enterprise, as so many have done, as a collection of such platitudes. And, of course, everyone writes in the light of the absolute failure of the project. Moreover, the whole idea of a chivalrous assault on the enemies of Christendom has been seen in the light of the disaster at Nicopolis of 1396—an enterprise with which Philippe does not seem to have been associated. But actually, in the light of the military history of the fourteenth century I now suspect that in a military sense I rather underestimated the practicality of his ideas.

As a man high in the service of Peter I and then Charles V of France (1364–1380) he would have known a great deal about his world, and

³ Andrea Tarnowski, "Material examples: Philippe de Mézières's Order of the Passion," *Yale French Studies* 110 (2006), 1701 [163–75].

⁴ *Secrets of True Crusaders to help them recover the Holy Land*, part xiv, book iii, trans. Anthony Stewart (London: Palestine Pilgrims Texts Society, 1896). There is no good translation of the whole of Sanudo, but see Christopher Tyerman, "Marino Sanudo Torsello and the lost Crusade: lobbying in the fourteenth century," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 32 (1982), 57–73.

⁵ Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, ed. G. W. Coopland, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1969), 1: 425; Joan Williamson, "Philippe de Mézières and the Idea of Crusade" in Malcolm Barber, ed., *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick* (Aldershot, 1994), 358–64.

⁶ Valerie Krishna, ed., *The alliterative Morte Arthure: A critical edition* (New York, 1976).

especially the Middle East where he had voyaged so intensively. Indeed, there is clear evidence that he went to great lengths to obtain information, questioning merchants, travellers and others.⁷ The West was of course divided: the Plantagenets and Valois were at one another's throats, while the German Empire had ceased to be much more than a geographic expression and central Europe was just as fragmented. In Spain, the *reconquista* faded after 1350, largely because Castile and Aragon warred savagely with one another, even though both suffered from internal problems. What had bid fair to become a Catalan Empire ruled from Aragon was flagging. Granada was sustained in its resistance to the Christian attack by alliance with the Marinids of Morocco, but by the middle of the century they had many rivals in the Maghreb. Frankish Greece was a welter of small lordships of which the greatest was Catalan Athens. Venice maintained a stronghold on Crete and the islands of the Aegean, though not to the exclusion of Genoa against which she fought a series of wars culminating in a peace of exhaustion in 1380.

Philippe always showed himself highly conscious of the atomisation of political authority in Europe and the Mediterranean. But his lifetime coincided with a period of acute fragmentation in the wider world which was not without impact on his world, and of which, in *Le songe du vieil pelerin* he shows at least a limited awareness.⁸ In 1351 the Red Turban revolt broke out in China and in 1368 the Mongol dynasty of the Yuan was overthrown in favour of the Ming (1368–1644), destroying the prestige of the rulers of this steppe heartland. This reduced the prospect of the emergence of a new Great Khan. Further west the various Hordes fought with one another and the Golden Horde split into Blue and White factions easing their domination over Rus. After 1335 Mongol (Il Khanid) Persia dissolved into regional powers. Civil war weakened Byzantium, of whom Philippe was thoroughly contemptuous, and opened the way for attacks on her lands by Turkish *beyliks* of Asia Minor.⁹ Amongst these, of course, were the Ottomans.

In his writings, Philippe was clearly impressed by the fighting qualities of the Turks. But they were not invincible. The young Philippe

⁷ Tarnowski, "Material examples," 165.

⁸ *Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 2: 242v 2.

⁹ *Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 1:233–4.

fought and won his spurs and was knighted at the battle of Smyrna in 1346 when Zalabi, an Emir from South Western Anatolia was defeated.¹⁰ In 1363, Amadeus VI of Savoy, though he had only a small army, enjoyed considerable success against the Ottoman Turks in Gallipoli. In 1365 Philippe's own master, Peter I, seized Alexandria in an assault which was greatly helped by the lack of a commander, and therefore, of discipline and order, within the city. Indeed, despite the Frankish presence, "Traders and youths went out for amusement, taking no notice of the enemy."¹¹ Philippe's experience and whole career meant that he had a sharp eye for the strengths and weaknesses of his enemies. They were not invincible but they were very formidable and, as a result, he perceived the need for discipline and order in the service of the crusade. This, I think, reflects his knowledge of the main Muslim powers who would be the target of any expedition.

Anatolian Turkish forces were formidable light cavalry, relying on horse-archers. The decay of the Mongol empire had created a vast reservoir of restless military manpower on the southern steppe, in the areas we now call Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. These swords, or, perhaps more accurately, bows for hire, could find important outlets for their activities in the Muslim lands of the Mediterranean. Traditionally the Mamluks had recruited from this area. Ibn-Khaldun had always emphasized that you should get your Turks fresh from the steppe. But their availability meant that even petty *beyliks* might, with luck, aspire to real power. Amongst these, the Ottomans thrived because they faced divided enemies, especially after they got to Europe in 1345. Their fighting methods were well known. In battle, the steppe horse-archers relied on rapid movement and the use of firepower to break up the formations of their enemies, before they charged home with edged weapons. They lacked siege equipment, so their method of conquest essentially consisted of ravaging the countryside, isolating towns and forcing their eventual surrender. It was not until 1326 that the Ottomans managed to conquer Bursa, followed by Nicaea in 1331. The success of the Ottomans and the lure of fighting infidels attracted many of the Turks of the southern steppe who preferred this kind of freebooting to the discipline of the Mamluks.

¹⁰ Nicolae Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières 1327-1405* (1896, repr. London, 1973), 52-7.

¹¹ Al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-siluk* ed. A. F. Ashour (Cairo, 1970), translated in Peter Holt, *The Age of the Crusades. The Middle East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London, 1986), 126.

The Turks of Asia Minor had a formidable style of war, but it was well known by Philippe's time. Moreover, for the Ottoman sultans it had the obvious drawback of leaving much authority in the hands of tribal leaders whose loyalty could be suspect. These convergent pressures prompted Murad I (1362–89) to far-reaching reforms, which created a highly centralised bureaucratic monarchy in the Middle Eastern tradition, which collected taxes centrally and disbursed pay to a standing army. Military development was the driving force of this enormous change. The light cavalry did not disappear, and would always remain an important element in Ottoman armies, but the creation of a heavy cavalry arm, the *sipahis*, who enjoyed great influence and prestige in the *sanjaks* [territorial districts], was very important. At the same time the *yeni ceri* (Janissaries), a highly disciplined and well-equipped infantry, came to form the core of his forces. This was a new army and its hallmark was discipline and obedience, made possible by regular pay and good support services. This organization was developing during Philippe's lifetime, and it probably leant weight to his emphasis on discipline. It was the very lack of this quality, which led to the disastrous failure of the crusading expedition, which foundered at Nicopolis in 1396.

But the enemy Philippe most had in mind was probably the Mamluks of Egypt. When he first wrote they were undoubtedly the single greatest power in the Mediterranean. The Mamluk sultans of Egypt had expelled the crusaders from the Holy Land in 1291 and now held the Holy City which was at the very centre of his aspirations. The Mamluks were slave-soldiers, recruited into the service of the powers of the Middle East since the ninth century from the Asian steppe peoples. They had deposed the Ayyubids of Egypt in 1250 and created their own Sultanate, which was a highly militarized regime. Ruthless taxation of the productive and traditionally pliant peasantry of Egypt provided the sinews of war for the regime. Generation by generation, hardy soldiers were recruited from the peoples of the Southern steppe where the quarrels of the Mongol successor states guaranteed an ample supply of willing troops.¹² They were taken as young men, technically slaves (Mamluk), and then highly trained in the arts of

¹² Speros Vryonis, "Byzantine and Turkish Societies and their sources of manpower," in Vernon J. Parry and Malcolm Yapp, eds., *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London, 1975), 125–52; Carter Findley, *The Turks in World History* (Oxford, 2005); Claude Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, trans. Peter Holt (Harlow, 2001).

war after which they were freed.¹³ Daily exercises with swords against clay targets were imposed, and they were taught “shower-shooting” which produced clouds of well-aimed arrows at a range of around eighty meters.¹⁴ Such accuracy and speed of fire were not unknown in Islam and amongst the steppe peoples, but it was the consistency provided by training, allied to a formidable capacity for close-quarter battle, which made the Mamluks so successful. Traditionally the steppe peoples were light horsemen, mounted archers, relying on the mobility provided by strings of horses to shower their enemies from about fifty meters, breaking up formations before charging home. But under Saladin heavier cavalry mounted on bigger horses had become an element in Islamic armies to counter the crusader knights.¹⁵ The Mamluks systematized a kind of synthesis of these styles of war. Mamluks had two horses, not steppe-ponies but substantial grain-fed animals, capable of carrying a rider protected by mail and lamellar armour. Their bows were stronger and heavier than the traditional steppe composite, providing additional range. They were formed into disciplined retinues under important senior officers, the *amirs*, and paid by the army ministry in the form of grants of land and taxes called *iqta*.¹⁶ The Mamluks ruled Egypt and Syria whose lands, it has been calculated, could, at least nominally, support 24,000 and 30,000 horsemen respectively. This meant that the Mamluks could produce a very large army of light native horsemen amongst whom the Bedouin were particularly notable.¹⁷

The leading *amirs* in Egypt formed what can be called a “military republic” which chose the sultan, though usually only after bitter

¹³ David Ayalon, “Notes on the Furusiyya Exercises and Games in the Mamluk Sultanate,” in Uriel Heyd, ed., *Studies in Islamic Civilization and History* 9 (1961), 31–62; Henry Rabie, “The Training of the Mamluk Faris,” and Vernon Parry, “La manière de combat,” both in Parry and Yapp, eds., *War, Technology, and Society*, 153–63, 218–29.

¹⁴ John D. Latham, “Notes on Mamluk Horse-Archers,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African* 32 (1969), 257–67 and John Latham and William Paterson, eds., *Saracen Archery* (London, 1970), 150–151.

¹⁵ Claude Cahen, “Un traité d’armurerie compose pour Saladin,” *Bulletin d’Études orientales de l’Institut Français de Damas* 12 (1947/8), 103–63.

¹⁶ David Ayalon, “Preliminary remarks on the Mamluk Military Institution in Islam,” in Parry and Yapp, 44–58; Michael Brett, “The origins of the Mamluk military system in the Fatimid period,” in Urbain Vermeulen and D. de Smet, eds., *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras* (Leuven, 1995), 39–52.

¹⁷ David Ayalon, “Studies on the structure of the Mamluk Army III,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16 (1954), 57–90.

struggles. Nasser Mohamed Ben Qalawoon established a real despotism (1309–40), but only after two earlier periods as sultan, 1293–94 and 1298–1309 interrupted by the rule of rivals. After his death, no less than ten sultans ruled before 1363, and it was the troubled minority of an eleventh, Ashraf Zeen Eddin Ben Hassan (1363–76), which created the conditions for the Cypriot success at Alexandria in 1365. The conflicts amongst the *amirs* were sharpened as more and more Circassian Mamluks were recruited, culminating in the reigns of the formidable Barquq (1382–88 and 1390–99) whose success, however, failed to establish a stable dynasty. The rise of the Circassians (a general name given to peoples from Azerbaijan and north-western Persia) reflected new difficulties in recruiting steppe Turks, perhaps because many of these found service in the armies of the *beyliks* of Anatolia who were much more active in fighting non-Islamic enemies. It has been suggested that by the end of the fourteenth century the supply of first generation steppe people was drying up and that the Mamluk army was losing something of its edge, but it remained formidable.

Philippe, well informed about the Mediterranean world as he was, therefore, had a certain basis for his optimism about the liberation of Jerusalem, but the solidification of the Ottoman regime, of which he seems to have been conscious, changed things as time went on. He always, however, recognised that the enemy was formidable. Moreover, he was clearly well-informed about contemporary Western warfare because his order was not a merely chivalric force. Knights, it is true dominate in his constitution, but he demanded that it should be broadly representative of the church, of the bourgeois and even of the artisans. This has its military consequence in the insistence that the army should have sergeants, crossbowmen, archers (with shield-bearers), and spearmen. Indeed the knights are described in terms of “lances,” a knight and his supporters such as was used to recruit mercenaries, especially in Italy.¹⁸ In his Order he also envisaged a number of specialists whose support would be essential, and this was in line with the growing specialization within contemporary armies. There is a remarkable list of the officers in charge of logistics and other functions, including a *recteur de l’artellerie* who was presumably in charge

¹⁸ Michael Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters. Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (London, 1974); Philippe Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages* trans. Michael Jones (Oxford, 1984), 127–28.

of the various engines noted elsewhere. This may or may not refer to gunpowder weapons which, during his lifetime, were at an early stage of development. He even suggested that Eastern Christians could be employed as spies.

Philippe envisaged his order as being based around 1,000 knights with 2,000 other mounted men and 6,000 sergeants, archers etc. They would be supported by 12,000 “not of the habit of the Order” and a huge fleet with 10,000 sailors. The costs of this array were 3,350,000 francs over 3 years, a gigantic sum, which reflected the escalating costs of war in late medieval Europe. St Louis’ crusade had cost 1.5 million *livres* over 6 years, but Charles IV (1322–28) envisaged that a serious expedition would cost 1.6 million *livres* annually. Sanudo was somewhat more modest, suggesting his plans would require 2 million florins per year, but this was probably an underestimate.¹⁹ One can hardly take issue with Philippe’s numbers for 20,000 would have represented a very major challenge to the Mamluks whose armies were commonly smaller than that. This would have been much larger than the army which, under St Louis, had almost conquered Egypt. Its chances of success would have been relatively high. On the other hand, it was not of an impossible size, such as the four large armies he envisaged converging on Jerusalem in revenge for Nicopolis towards the end of his life.²⁰ The project for the Order is based upon a careful analysis of the crusading past. He certainly praised the champions who established the old Latin Kingdom, but he recognised that their enterprise had not been successful. This was a result of selfishness amongst the leaders of the kingdom and the failure of a divided and luxurious West to give them proper and sustained support. The answer, therefore, had to be a regular force. But regular armies were only starting to emerge in Europe where most soldiers served only fitfully. And in any case the regular model posed problems for an international effort. So Philippe’s Order embodied the notion of a standing force, but in the form of an order which was appropriate with a necessarily spiritual framework.

His Order, combining all the arms then used, would have been remarkable. And we should not underrate its fighting power. The heavy cavalry of the West were formidable and, if properly handled,

¹⁹ Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades. From Lyons to the Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992), 435–57.

²⁰ Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 502–04.

very effective against Turkish forces. Richard I had demonstrated that and the fourteenth century had witnessed the increased use of plate-armour. This was certainly heavy but it provided enormous protection in the close-quarter fight, which was the usual culmination of battle. Even at Nicopolis large numbers survived the actual battle only to be massacred on the orders of Bayezid I (1389–1403). Western missile-throwers, in the form of Genoese crossbowmen and English archers, particularly the latter, had improved their technique since 1291. Steady infantry were available for hire in Flanders and elsewhere. Philippe had a deep belief in the chivalrous knight but he was no mere chivalric snob and recognised the need for other soldiers in any great undertaking. He has little to say about how his order and the crusade should fight, confining himself to generalities about valour and persistence.

But it is inconceivable that he had not considered the new thinking about strategy and tactics. The value of mobility in the English armies of the fourteenth century was very evident. Concentrated archery proved its worth in battle, while in the commoner business of ravaging and hit-and-run raids, the mounted bowman had enormous value. On a grander scale, Edward III had demonstrated the value of the strategic offensive allied to the tactical defensive, as Clifford Rogers has shown.²¹ This had proved highly successful at Crecy in 1346. As a result, ten years later at Poitiers, the French showed considerable adaptation to the new realities by dismounting their knights and attempting to avoid the full impact of English archery. They did not, of course, change the essence of their warfare, but that was because they could not. Medieval armies were heavily dependent upon the “native skills” of the populations from which they were drawn. But Philippe clearly hoped that his order and its crusade, by virtue of its international make-up, would achieve a degree of balance between all the desirable elements of force.

Philippe’s design for a regular standing force to spearhead the crusade and to hold the re-conquered Holy Lands was based on a careful analysis of the mistakes of the past. The force he envisaged would have been a considerable threat to its most obvious enemies, the Mamluks. When he first envisaged his Order in the 1360s, the problems of the regime in Egypt were very clearly grave and the whole region was in a

²¹ Clifford Rogers, *War cruel and sharp: English strategy under Edward III, 1327–1360* (Woodbridge, 2001).

state of upheaval. Though the Ottomans were clearly making progress, their position was not yet consolidated. The leaders of the Nicopolis expedition seem never to have reflected on the growing strength of the Ottoman state and the remarkable changes in its army. That Philippe should have placed enormous emphasis on matters alien to us—the right banner and the proper order of precedence and office—shows merely that he was a child of his age. Such trimmings should not disguise the effectiveness of the organization, which he envisaged. His careful thinking reflected a general conviction of the age that if Jerusalem was to be liberated it would need a really major effort. He simply provided a particular framework for that effort—his Order. But who was to make the effort?

Everybody knew that war was costly. Two years unsuccessful campaigning by Edward III of England (1327–77), 1338–40, cost no less than £400,000 and produced political tensions within the realm.²² In the conditions of the medieval agrarian economy, intensification of wealth production was very difficult, and the classic answer to human ambitions was extensification, the creation of an empire, which could afford war on a huge scale by plunder and the annexation of new land. The emerging states of Europe were only slowly intensifying wealth-production with the emergence of trading communities and banking. Their effectiveness can be noted by reference to the Italian city-states who, despite their small size and constant quarrels had maintained a naval supremacy across the Mediterranean since the First Crusade. But they were very small and divided. Elsewhere, only a few states could raise forces on a scale adequate to the task Philippe perceived and they had other uses for their money. As an adviser to the French king, Philippe was clearly well aware of these problems. Philippe de Mézières' solution was the classic one: to make the Order self-financing with its members paying their way in anticipation of the proceeds of conquest. Unfortunately, this was wholly inadequate for the scale of what was required.

In conclusion, it can be stated that it would be unfair to regard Philippe as an impractical dreamer. He had a real grasp of the difficulties facing any attempt to recover the Holy Land, and the Order that he designed was a flexible nucleus for the great task. But he could not

²² Michael Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages* (New Haven, 1996), 339.

generalise what he had, and what was so obviously lacking amongst the Christian nations, a real will to achieve the liberation of the Holy Places. I think it was his recognition of this brute fact that produced the minutiae of his prescriptions and the revisions of the text. In the end, they were displacement activity, as he recognized that what was needed was never going to happen.

WAR OR PEACE? PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES,
RICHARD II AND ANGLO-FRENCH DIPLOMACY

Anne Curry

The aim of this paper is to place Philippe de Mézières' *Epistre au roi Richart* into context not only of the contemporary political situation of England and of France but also of relations between them. It also strives to date the writing of the text and its receipt in England. The commonly held view is that the *Epistre* was commissioned from Mézières by Charles VI in 1395 to persuade Richard to marry Isabella, the French king's six-year-old daughter, as the means of a rapprochement between the two nations. But further questions need to be asked, not least why the *Epistre* took the form it did. There has been surprisingly little analysis of the text despite an edition and English translation published in 1975.¹

The only known manuscript of the *Epistre* is British Library Royal 20 B. vi. We can assume that it was received at Richard II's court in the mid 1390s.² On the recto of the second folio we find the well-known presentation miniature (fig. 1) but this scene must be treated as imaginary. There is no evidence that Mézières, although widely travelled, came to England at any point in his life. Whilst it is possible that the portrayal resembles the man himself, we cannot say the same for Richard or any of his courtiers since it is unlikely that the artist had ever seen the English king or his nobles.³ The presentation miniature

¹ *Philippe de Mézières, Letter to King Richard II. A Plea made in 1395 for Peace between England and France*, intro. and trans. George W. Coopland (Liverpool, 1975) (henceforward *Letter*: the first set of digits refers to the Old French text and the second to Coopland's English translation).

² J. Stratford, "The Early Royal Collections and the Royal Library to 1461," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 3, eds. L. Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), esp. 260. I am extremely grateful to Dr Stratford for her kindness in discussing the work with me, and for her essential advice on manuscripts of the period. See *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the old Royal and King's Collections*, eds. G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson 3 vols. (London, 1921), vol. 2, 363. See also <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=8535&CollID=16&NStart=200206>.

³ There are similarities with Mézières' portrayal in the presentation scene of the *Livre du sacrement de mariage* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, manuscrit

resembles the layout of other Parisian manuscripts of the period.⁴ The author is identified by the banner of the Order of the Passion which he holds, and the English king by the heraldry on his throne.

The manuscript is an accomplished example of those produced in late-fourteenth century Paris. The good quality parchment is ruled in double columns of 24 lines and is written in well-formed book hand. This contrasts with other works of Mézières such as the *Epistre lamentable* and the *Sustance de la chevalerie de la passion de Jhesu Crist en francois*.⁵ The well executed dragon and ivy leaf borders on folios 1v and 2r are characteristic of Paris illumination of the decades around 1400. There are only three miniatures. A full page miniature (fol. 1v) forms the frontispiece to the work. It portrays, within an architectural framework, the crowns of England and France on either side of the Crown of Thorns. The half-page presentation miniature occupies the full width of folio 2r but is only 12 lines deep. The third eight-line miniature on folio 35r depicts the banner of the Order of the Passion. It is not illuminated (i.e. it contains no gold) and occupies a single column. Gold is used in the frontispiece where it is used to highlight the crowns, inscriptions, and heraldic elements as well as the framework and border decoration. The lines of text under the presentation scene are in alternating colours of gold, blue and red. The prayer-like invocation after the *incipit* is in gold. The main divisions in the text are marked by four-line initials; the minor divisions in a decreasing hierarchy from three lines to one. The illuminator has been identified as Perrin Remiet who lived on the rue des Ecrivains in Paris close to the house of Regnault de Montet, the favourite *libraire* (bookseller) of Jean, duke of Berry.⁶

français 1175). In both, the presenter wears a grey wool robe and is bare-headed. He is not in the robes of the Celestine Order. There is no evidence that Mézières was a professed Celestine: he simply retired to their house in Paris.

⁴ Dhira B. Mahoney, "Courtly Presentation and Authorial Self-fashioning: Frontispiece Miniatures in Late Medieval French and English Manuscripts," *Medievalia* 21 (1996), 97–160.

⁵ It provides a relatively large size script for ease of reading, with 24 lines per page throughout, the page dimensions being 260 × 178 mm.

⁶ According to François Avril the same illuminator was responsible for a number of other manuscripts in Latin and in French which survive today in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and in the Bibliothèque de St. Geneviève: "Trois manuscrits napolitains des collections de Charles V et de Jean de Berry," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 127 (1969), 307, n.2. See also R. A. Rouse and M. A. Rouse, *Manuscripts and their Makers. Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris 1200–1500*, 2 vols (Paris, 2000), vol. 1, 293–7, and 402, n.63; vol. 2, 115.

The manuscript now consists of 83 folios containing around 35,000 words. A stub between folios 1 and 2 indicates that there is a folio missing between the frontispiece and the presentation scene.⁷ This would most likely have been blank for the sake of protecting the images from colour transfer, and was presumably lost when the work was rebound in later centuries. It is difficult to assess how long production of the manuscript would have taken. The system of gatherings permitted more than one scribe and artist to work simultaneously and, as we have seen, there is only a small number of major illuminations. None the less, the direction and foresight which went into the manuscript, perhaps by Mézières himself, is evident. That it was “proof read” is suggested by a few marginal corrections.⁸ The decoration was intended to bring key passages to the reader’s attention. In the Prologue the nine “materes,” through which Mézières explains the structure of the work, each begin with a coloured initial L. In the text each “matere” is introduced by a rubric and chapter heading in red.

It seems that when Mézières directly addresses King Richard a decorated initial or word is used. Significantly, the text on fols. 34v and 35r which mentions Mézières’ Order (“comment le viel solitaire present au roy dAngleterre un nouvelle chevalerie/du crucifix”) and which precedes the miniature of the banner of the Order (which shows the Paschal Lamb carrying the banner of the Resurrection), is in red.⁹ The frontispiece is also redolent of references to the Passion through the cross on the ascender of the central letter in IHS, the Crown of Thorns and droplets of blood, and the name of Christ. The eye is drawn to the Crown of Thorns from which beams of golden light link to the crowns of Charles, king of France (the larger of the two crowns) and of Richard, king of England, tying them to “Ihesus, roy de paix.” The theme of peace is reinforced by the Latin tag “pax vobis” above the crown of thorns. These two illustrations might be seen as useful visual aids for the presentation of the text and the arguments it contained. They could also serve a future meditative purpose to remind the reader of the arguments of the work without his needing to read it. But the mention of “reading” raises a difficult and unanswerable question. Was the work ever read to

⁷ There must originally have been 84 folios. Catchwords reveal ten gatherings of eight folios the first of which begins on folio 2r, and two additional folios at the end. There must therefore originally have been two folios at the beginning.

⁸ For instance on folios 6r, 34r and 48v.

⁹ “Here the Old Solitary offers to the king of England a new Order of Chivalry of the Crucified One” (*Letter*, 30/103).

or by Richard II? If so—and remember we have no proof he ever saw it—we need to ask when this might be, what arguments it put to him, and what impact it might have had.

The work is not dated internally and no references have been found in administrative records of either France or England which might fix its composition or its presentation chronologically. It is not mentioned in any of the surviving diplomatic correspondence. There has been speculation that it was brought to England by Robert the Hermit, one of Mézières “apostles” for his proposed Order of the Passion, as part of the Anglo-French negotiations of 1395 and that a letter of Charles VI to Richard II of 15 May 1395 was written by Mézières as a summary of the *Epistre* to accompany the work as whole.¹⁰ The final text of the *Epistre* as we now have it must post-date the death of Richard’s first queen, Anne of Bohemia, which occurred on 7 June 1394, and precede his marriage to Isabella, daughter of Charles VI, the proxy betrothal for which occurred on 11 March 1396 with the ceremony on 4 November following. Yet the specific proposal that Richard should marry a daughter of Charles is not explicitly mentioned until fol. 77r, six folios before the end of the work, although the heading (in red) at the beginning of the ninth “matere” on fol. 73r speaks of “confirmacion de la paix et amour des ii. roys par le moien d’une doulce alliance par mariage gracieux”.¹¹ Isabella herself is never named at all in the work, but the assumption that she is the intended bride is based on the descriptions of the proposed bride as “the daughter of the carbuncle” (one of the allegories of Charles VI established in the first *matere*, fol. 20r) and as under age (fols. 77r–79r), and the fact that this marriage did materialise.¹² The first known reference to a definite proposal that Richard should marry Isabella comes in powers given by the king to English ambassadors on 8 July 1395.¹³

¹⁰ John Palmer, “The Background to Richard II’s Marriage to Isabel of France (1396),” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 44 (1971), 10; Jonathan Sumpston, *Divided Houses. The Hundred Years War III* (London, 2009), 823; for the letter of 15 May, *Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions, from All Souls MS. 182*, ed. Mary Dominica Legge (Anglo-Norman Text Society, no. 109) (Oxford, 1941).

¹¹ “A proposed ratification of peace and love between our two kings through a happy alliance and gracious marriage,” *Letter*, 63/137.

¹² She was born on 9 November 1389. Léon Mirot, “Isabelle de France, reine d’Angleterre, comtesse d’Angoulême, duchesse d’Orléans 1389–1409. Episode de relations entre la France et l’Angleterre pendant la guerre de Cent Ans,” *Revue d’histoire diplomatique*, 18 (1904), 543–73, and 19 (1905), 60–95, 161–91.

¹³ Thomas Rymer, *Foedera, conventiones, litterae et cujusunque generis acta publica*, 20 vols. (London, 1704–35), 7:802–5.

In the *Epistre* not only does mention of Richard's marriage to Charles's daughter appear remarkably late but so too does Mézières' mention that he has composed the work at the behest of Charles VI himself ("par la benivolence et expres commandement de la royale majeste de votre tres ame frere Charles roy de France dittee et composee").¹⁴ This comes even later, on fol. 82v, only one folio before the end of the work. To that point, the *Epistre* is both implicitly and explicitly the voice of the "Old Solitary," mostly in the third person but in some sections using the personal pronoun. Mézières never gives his real name, as is typical of his later works.¹⁵

We could interpret the late appearance of both the marriage and the royal commission as a deliberate literary ploy. The reader is persuaded into thinking one thing only to be jolted by a surprise ending. Was this a means of reinforcing the impact of the ending, thereby making the marriage the most memorable element of the work as a whole? Possibly, but this is not a common rhetorical form of putting forward an argument in the Middle Ages. Using a modern analogy, the *Epistre* is like a long, and in many ways rambling, joke which takes a very long time to get to the punch line, and when it does, the particular punch line is not what was expected. It is of course possible that an oral explanation accompanied the presentation of the *Epistre* to Richard, giving the punch line separately and in advance of the reading (either personal or public) of the text. But if that were the case, why would a reader be inspired to read or have read the whole work? And why would the author need to bother to write a work of this length and variety of content?

We cannot escape the fact that the work contains a Prologue (fols. 2v–5r) setting out the author's proposed order of proceeding and that this does not contain any proposal for the marriage of Richard to a daughter of Charles nor does it suggest that the work has been commissioned by the French king. In the Prologue Mézières tells us that nine different matters (*materes*) are to be treated in sacred memory

¹⁴ "Composed and dictated by the benevolence and express command of the royal majesty of your beloved brother Charles, King of France," *Letter*, 71/145.

¹⁵ For the popularity of the epistolary form, see Sandra A. Hindman, *Christine de Pizan's "Epistre d'Othéa." Painting and Politics at the Court of Charles VI* (Toronto, 1986), 26, 30–2. Daisy Delogu, "Public Displays of Affection: Love and Kinship in Philippe de Mézières' 'Epistre au roi Richart'," *New Medieval Literatures* 8 (2006), 102, suggests that Charles "chose to have Philippe stand in as the actual sender."

of the nine orders of angels.¹⁶ He then gives a brief summary of six of these matters. The first “establishes a concordance as between certain precious stones and medicines and the high persons of the kings of France and England.” The second concerns “the schism in the Church...and the remedy, that is, true peace between the two kings and in all Christendom.” The third deals with the *saint passage d’outremer* [the holy journey overseas] and as preparation for that passage, the Old Solitary offers to the King of England “une nouvelle chevalerie, tres necessaire pour le dit saint passage et pour la reformation de toute la crestiente” [a new Order of Chivalry, essential for the said passage and for the reform of all Christendom].

It is for the fourth matter that the Old Solitary intends to turn his attention to Richard’s marriage: “la quarte matere si est un petit traitie touchant au mariage de la royale mageste du roy d’Angleterre” [the fourth matter treats of a marriage which has been proposed for the king of England]. However, this is not a proposal for an Anglo-French match at all but concerns a marriage (unspecified) which threatened to hinder holy peace between the two kings, “par lequel la sainte paix des deux roys pourroit estre empeschiee,” and Mézières’ proposed remedy (“le remede du dit empeschement”), which was for the king to remain unmarried.¹⁷ The Prologue outlines the fifth matter (“si est une exemple intelligible qui condampne les roys crestienes d’espender le sanc humain de leurs freres crestiens”) and then the sixth (“pour confirmation de la vraye paix des ii roys, la fine escharboucle figuree et le fin dyamant figure doivent estre trempé, arouse, et enyvre du precieux vin des vingnes d’Engadi”).¹⁸ For the remaining three of the nine “materes,” however, no detail is given: the Prologue (fol. 4v) simply

¹⁶ *Letter*, 4–5/76–7. Mézières’ lost *Songe du povre pelerin*, written for Bureau de la Rivière and his wife, also uses the figure nine: “ix journées principales du grant pelerinage des sauvées et des dampnés, ix autres journées singulières des chevaliers preuz par lesquelles on peut parvenir à prouesse et souveraine vaillance en ce monde et comme preuz seoir à la table du roy et en la fin à la table de l’aiglelet occis, lassus en paradis” see Nicolae Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières 1327–1405 et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896), 467. Note also the similar emphasis on the Lamb of the Passion.

¹⁷ The heading at the beginning of the fourth section speaks of “aucuns mariages touchans au roy d’Angleterre par lesquelz la paix desirée pourroit estre empeschee, et le remede au propos” but does not specify any bride or brides, *Letter*, 33/106.

¹⁸ Fifth: “certain plain examples are given serving to condemn the shedding of Christian blood;” sixth: “to confirm and strengthen peace between our two kings, the carbuncle and the diamond, figuratively speaking, must be immersed in, watered and imbued with the precious wines from vineyards of Engadi,” *Letter*, 5/77.

states “Et les autres iii. sont plusieurs exemples tendans a la conclusion et paix tant desirée des proudomes de la crestiente” [The remaining three matters enumerate various examples which may help towards the establishment of that real peace so much desired by all good men and all Christendom].¹⁹

On fol. 59v we arrive at the text of the seventh section, and the heading

la vii matere de cese presente epistre demonstre comment les ii. rois, si'ils auront guerre, devendront sers a tous leurs subgiez. Et s'ils[sic] auront paix, tout le contraire [The seventh subject of this present letter demonstrates that if the two kings make war on each other, they will become the serfs of all their subjects. And if they make peace, the opposite holds good].²⁰

On fol. 62r we reach the following heading

La viii^e matere de cest present espistre demonstre ii. vergiers, ou jardins, l'un tres delieueux et compare a la paix, et l'autre horrible et perilleux et compare a la guerre, presentes aus ii. roys, afin qu'il preignent l'un et se gardent de l'autre [The eighth subject of this present letter deals with two orchards or gardens: one most pleasing and to be compared with peace, the other horrible and full of peril, to be likened to war; which are displayed before the Kings, so that they may choose the one and beware of the other].²¹

Each garden is then described in turn, under headings “le vergier delitable” [the delectable orchard], and “le jardin horrible et perilleux” [the garden of horror and perils]. This is followed on fols. 69v–70r by a heading “la concordance des ii. vergiers par le moien des ii. grans perilz de mer, l'un appelle Sillam et l'autre Caripdim” [the concordance made between the two orchards by way of a comparison with two great hazards of the sea, Scylla and Charybdis]. This, I suggest, had originally been intended by de Mézières as the ninth section of his work. This interpretation fits perfectly as the third of the three examples promised in the Prologue as “exemples tendans a la conclusion et paix tant desirée des proudomes de la crestiente” [examples which may help towards the establishment of that real peace so much desired by all good men and all Christendom].

That the *Epistre* was intended to end after the section on Scylla and Charybdis can be seen by the passage on fols. 72r to 73r which is

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ *Letter*, 51/124.

²¹ *Letter*, 53/127.

introduced by the words “une briefve excusation du vieil solitaire de la prolixite de ceste presente epistre” [a short justification by the Old Solitary of the length of this letter].²² Subsequent phrases, such as the further craving of pardon on the part of the author and a reiteration of the main themes of the work as a whole, emphasise that this passage was the intended conclusion of the work. Most telling of all is the final “envoie” on fol. 73r: “laquelle amour Dieu par sa sainte grace vueille adrecier et confermer, a la loenge de sa divine bonte et consolacion de toute la crestiente” [may God in His grace arouse and confirm such love, to the glory of His divine goodness and the consolation of all Christendom]. Yet the *Epistre* does not end here but goes on to “la ix^e matere et la darraine de ceste present epistre, c’est assavoir une briefve recapitulacion de la sustance de la dicte epistre, et confirmacion de la paix et amour des ii. roys par le moien d’une doulce alliance par mariage gracieux, qui sera occasion en Dieu de la paix de la crestiente” [The ninth and last matter of this letter, namely a brief recapitulation of its substance and proposed ratification of peace and love between our two Kings through a happy alliance and gracious marriage, which, under God, may be the means of bringing peace to all Christendom]—the marriage of Richard to an under-age daughter of Charles.²³

The form of the text suggests therefore that Mézières had begun to draft the *Epistre* as a personal writing directed at Richard much as he had written *Le songe du vieil pelerin* directed at Charles. His purpose in writing the *Epistre* was to encourage Richard not to reopen the Anglo-French war, thereby facilitating not only an end to the papal schism but also a crusade to recover the Holy Land. This crusade would be begun by the members of Mézières’ new Order of the Passion who would pave the way for the main army led by Charles and Richard jointly. The *Epistre* was, I argue, intended to persuade Richard to give formal support for the Order and thereby to give further encouragement to members of his family and household who had joined or were inclined to do so. Particularly important here is what is said at the end of the text of the *Epistre*’s third matter (fols. 35r–38r). Mézières gives three reasons (fols. 37v–38r) “qui vous devroient mouvoir en Dieu de

²² “To conclude, then, this feeble and ill-composed writing, it must be admitted that the Old Solitary well recognises that the matters included in it, diverse yet interconnected, dictated by an abler and more distinguished writer, would have been expressed in many fewer words, because the great lords of today, on account of the importance and occupation with temporal affairs, find great satisfaction in brief writings,” *Letter*, 62–63/136–37.

²³ *Letter*, 63/137.

doulcement embracier par les bras de vraye amour et de charite ceste gracieuse et nouvelle chevalerie, nommee et apelee du nom de la passion du benoit Filz de Dieu.” The first was commonplace: “le grant desir que vous avez au salut des ames de vos freres les crestiens.” The second was “pour satisfaire aucunement as grans debtes de vos trez amez peres...qui en mon temps ii. fois ont empeshchie le saint passage” [Which under God should spur you to embrace with the arms of love and charity this gracious new Order of Chivalry, which takes its title from the Passion of the Blessed Son of God...the desire you have for the salvation of the souls of your Christian brethren...(to pay) debts incurred by your beloved fathers...who in my own times have twice prevented the voyage overseas by their accursed war].²⁴ This must be reference to the abortive efforts for cooperation in crusading in the 1330s and 1360s.

In terms of contemporary issues in England over the cost of war, it is the third reason, which is the most interesting. Mézières tells Richard that

si est que par l'exemple et effect de ceste sainte chevalerie, vostre roiale majeste, faisant le saint passage comme dit est dessus, quant a finances, qui ne seront pas petites, vous despenderes mains un million de florins que vous ne feries se de la dicte chevalerie n'estoit riens et ce se puet dire auxi de vostre frere le roy Charles qui seroit et sera, se a Dieu plaist, un grant avantage au bien publique de l'ost de la crestiente. Quel merveille, car mains despenderes, plus vous demourera de finance pour parfournir le saint passage et vostre tres sainte emprinse, sicomme de la verite de ceste tierce cause, vostre debonnairete pourra estre enfourmee clerement par le dit Robert l'ermite et par les vaillans chevaliers qui sont en Dieu disposez de commencer la sainte chevalerie.

[by the lead and influence of this Order of Chivalry, your royal majesty, making the journey as described, in respect of expense, which will be by no means small, will expend a million less florins than you would if the said Order did not exist, and the same is true for your brother Charles. All this would be and will be if God wills to the great benefit of the whole host of Christendom. This is not surprising, for the less you spend now, the more you will have to meet the cost of the actual journey and your holy enterprise. Your Highness may be informed of the truth of this third reason by the aforesaid Robert the Hermit, and those noble knights who are, under God, prepared to take part in such an Order of Chivalry].²⁵

²⁴ *Letter*, 32–33/105–6.

²⁵ *Letter*, 33/106.

This fits neatly with arguments put forward in *La sustance de la chevalerie de la passion de Jhesu Crist en francois* (Bodleian Library Ashmole 813), which is probably the manuscript of *La sustance abregie de la dicte chevalerie* which de Mézières tells us earlier in this third *matere* (fol. 37r) that he had given to the earl of Huntingdon (Richard's half-brother) to give to the king.²⁶ It tallies even more closely with the detailed calculations in the longer version of Mézières' plans for his Order in Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS 2251.²⁷ Mézières' intention to gain Richard's support for the Order and crusade is also apparent in the presentation scene of the *Epistre* where the banner of the Order is held by Mézières as he presents his work. The frontispiece was also intended "to draw Richard's attention to the prospect of a crusade."²⁸ Furthermore, as we have noted, the only other illustration in the body of the text is on fol. 35r, at the opening of the third *matere*, and is the banner of the Order once again. If Richard had already read the *sustance*, which Huntingdon had been asked to give to him, he would have known that "this banner is to be carried only by the prince when he leads his army in great battles."²⁹

My suggestion is, therefore, that Mézières had already drafted most of the *Epistre* to persuade Richard to support for the Order and crusade when a new line developed in French diplomacy—that Richard should be persuaded to marry Charles' daughter as a means of achieving peace. The *Epistre* was "hijacked" by Charles VI and his advisors and became a different work of a different length. Mézières simply changed his intended ninth section on Scylla and Charybdis to be an appendix to his eighth on the two gardens and added a new ninth section, as well as mention of the recent royal commission, and a new final *envoie*, indicated by an Amen and standard explicit. Whilst the fourth *matere* includes mention of Griselda and other fictional women as well as historical characters, the ninth *matere* concentrates only

²⁶ "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion: La sustance de la chevalerie de la passion de Jhesu Crist, Bodleian Library, Ashmole 813," ed. Abdel Hamid Hamdy, *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Alexandria University* 18 (1964), Part III, 43–104. Expiation of sins of the fathers is also a theme in this work, *ibid.* 71.

²⁷ Folios 92r–102v, summarised in Abdel Hamid Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion. Part II. The Sources," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Alexandria University* 18 (1964), Part II, 23–25.

²⁸ Hindman, *Christine de Pizan's "Epistre d'Othéa,"* 155.

²⁹ Hamdy, "Philippe...La sustance," 86. Hindman, *Christine de Pizan's "Epistre d'Othéa,"* 154, comments, "this last statement probably accounts for Philippe's presentation of the banner along with his book to Richard."

on women of the Old Testament and the Virgin. This also suggests a change of focus. The format of the manuscript also reinforces this argument. In the original conception of the work, the illumination of the banner of the Order on fol. 35r was placed almost exactly half way through the text. This suggests that the copyist was initially working from an existing draft of a complete work which had been written by Mézières or an amanuensis. Rather awkwardly, the final “Amen” of the work is positioned two lines from the end of the penultimate folio (83r). This forces the four-line *explicit* to be divided between this folio and the next so that the last folio (83v) contains only two lines. This suggests that there was not an existing full copy from which the final version was copied. It is also notable that the last ten or so folios containing the “new” ninth *matere* have less decoration and more textual errors. There is no doubt, however, that the manuscript we now have was produced in its final version for the purpose which it claims to be for. It is possible that the royal-commissioned redirection also gave rise to the frontispiece which, as noted earlier, is the only full page illumination in the whole work and which contains a greater density of gold decoration. Furthermore, the original first gathering began on what is now folio 2r, suggesting again that the frontispiece (and the lost intervening folio) was an afterthought.

The Prologue, with its outline of contents, shows clearly that the work had *not* begun as a royal commissioned work to persuade Richard to marry Isabella. We therefore need to see it in a different light and to look at it alongside Mézières’ other works of the period, especially his revival in the late 1380s and early 1390s of his ideas of earlier decades on the creation of the Order of the Passion. This helps us to see a consistency in his writings in these years.³⁰ Indeed, the only inconsistency comes in the new final section of the *Epistre*—the encouragement of Richard to marry the under-age French princess—since this goes against what he wrote elsewhere, both earlier in the *Epistre* and in other works, and has misled scholars about Mézières’ “voice.”

To understand the context of the work as originally envisaged we need to go back to 1388–1389.³¹ The first of these years sees not only the last English campaign into France (which ended in early September)

³⁰ John Palmer, *England, France and Christendom 1377–1399* (London, 1972), 187.

³¹ For the best summary of negotiations see Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, *passim*.

but also Charles VI declaring his majority in December. In the following May, Richard took control of his own government after the political challenges to him in the previous year. A month later, on 18 June 1389 a truce was proclaimed between England and France, and their allies.³² As John Palmer shows, Richard's resumption of power in 1389 was "evidently timed to coincide with the conclusion of the truce." With both kings exercising their personal will and with a truce, which was subsequently extended twice to Michaelmas 1394, preconditions for the revival of Mézières' ideas on an international order and a joint crusade were established.³³ Over the five years between 1389 and 1394 there were various diplomatic negotiations on a full Anglo-French peace treaty as well as considerations of solutions to the papal Schism. Indeed, the deaths of the rival popes also stimulated Mézières' hopes: first the death of Urban VI on 15 October 1389, and then that of the Avignon pope, Clement VII, on 16 September 1394, especially since the latter was followed by French efforts to postpone an election. Although these failed, the Avignon curia, including the new pope, Benedict XIII, swore to work to end the Schism. In May 1395 there were further French efforts to persuade Benedict to abdicate. This also provides a context for the *Epistre's* hopes.

Since the Anglo-French war was inextricably linked to the Schism, a solution to one would assist a solution to the other. Mézières had high hopes for Charles VI's role as reformer and peacemaker, as *Le songe du vieil pelerin* shows.³⁴ The *Songe* mentions the truce of Leulinghen of June 1389 and the writer's desire for a joint "sainte passage" by the two kings. In the Prologue to the *Songe* Mézières mentions "la Reigle de la nouvelle Arquemie de la passion de Jesuscrist qu'il a faicte et escript," an allusion to his initial invention of the Order several decades before, but there is no further mention of the Order at all.³⁵ This suggests that Mézières developed the idea of reviving and publicising his Order of the Passion after completing *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, inspired no doubt by progress in Anglo-French negotiations

³² *Foedera*, 7: 622.

³³ This was due to last until 16 August 1392 but was extended in May of that year to Michaelmas 1393. In April 1393 there was a further extension to Michaelmas 1394.

³⁴ This is also evident in Mézières' *Oratio Tragedica*, written between 1389 and 1390. Some of the ideas of the *Songe* were recycled in the *Epistre*, not least the interpretation of "Carolus" as "Cara lux."

³⁵ *Songe*, 1: 88.

in 1393–94.³⁶ This is revealed by Bodleian Library Ashmole 813. This manuscript, as noted earlier, is probably the *sustance abregiee* which Mézières tells us in the third *matere* of the *Epistre* that he gave to the earl of Huntingdon for King Richard. It is a short work on paper, which gives the principal points about the proposed Order, including uniforms and banner, and which was certainly written for circulation in a recruitment drive. Significantly too, it provides the first known occasion that Mézières had written about his Order in the vernacular.³⁷ The text of Ashmole 813 must pre-date the death of Clement VII (16 September 1394) since it names him as pope.³⁸ By contrast, the *Epistre* mentions the rival popes in its discussion of the second *matere* as Boniface and Benedict.³⁹ This section of the *Epistre* was therefore drafted after the election of the second Avignon pope, Benedict XIII on 28 September 1394. There can be no doubt that the text in Ashmole 813 pre-dates the *Epistre*: this is further reason for considering it to be the *sustance abregiee* which Mézières gave (*bailla*) to Huntingdon so that Richard “might know the blessings which could result from the establishment of this Order.”⁴⁰ If the wording can be taken to mean that Mézières handed the *sustance* to Huntingdon in person, a reconstruction of the earl’s movements could help to date this more closely.

Returning from Hungary the earl passed through France en route to joining Richard who was on campaign in Ireland. Shipping was ordered on 10 February 1395 to convey the earl from England to Ireland and

³⁶ In June 1393 a draft peace settlement was drawn up by the royal dukes of France and England based on a territorial solution to the Hundred Years War. All that was needed was for the two kings, Charles and Richard, to meet to ratify it and to deal with outstanding issues on the payment of homage and the position of Calais. This meeting never happened for several reasons: the reservations of the English parliament, which met between 27 January and 6 March 1394, the revolt of the Gascons in September 1394, and the increasing problems caused by Charles VI’s madness, which first afflicted him in 1392. John Palmer, “The Anglo-French Peace Negotiations 1390–1396,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 16 (1966), 81–94; idem, “Articles for a Final Peace between England and France, 16 June 1393,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 39 (1966), 180–4; J. A. Tuck, “Richard II and the Hundred Years War,” *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth-Century England*, ed. John Taylor and Wendy Childs (Gloucester, 1990), 117–31; Anne Curry, “Richard II and the War with France,” *The Reign of Richard II*, ed. Gwilym Dodd (Stroud, 2000), 33–50.

³⁷ The first redaction of his *Nova religio milicie passionis Jhesu Christi pro acquisitione Sancte Civitatis Jherusalem et Terre Sancte* dates to 1368, with a second redaction, also in Latin, in 1384.

³⁸ Hamdy, “Philippe... La sustance,” 61.

³⁹ *Letter*, 22/94.

⁴⁰ “Vous enformer du bien a advenir de la dicte chevalerie,” *Letter*, 32/105.

he began to receive wages of war for service there from 8 March.⁴¹ Therefore, he may have received the *sustance* from Mézières in Paris in January 1395. Maude Clarke suggests that the watermark of the paper belongs to 1395.⁴² We cannot be certain whether Huntingdon showed the work to Richard in Ireland or after the king's return to England in late May 1395, or whether he ever showed it to the king. In the *Epistre*, however, Mézières takes it for granted that the earl would have done, adding that the king "can be informed" on the Order also by "your beloved uncle, the duke of York, and by Sir John Harlestone, and others of your loyal subjects." York had been involved in peace negotiations at Amiens in 1392 and again at Leulinghen in 1393–4. Harlestone was also involved in these last named talks.⁴³ It is feasible that Mézières had met both of them as well as Huntingdon, who had also been involved in the negotiations at Amiens in 1392.⁴⁴ In the longer version of the *Sustance* (Arsenal 2251), which definitely dates to 1396 since it mentions that year, York and Harlestone are listed amongst those who had promised to become knights of the Order of the Passion, and Huntingdon is listed amongst those who promised to support the order.⁴⁵

In the recruitment drive for Mézières' Order of the Passion the importance of Robert the Hermit is well established. Robert le Mennot, a minor gentleman from the Cotentin, appeared on the scene in 1393 as a visionary who, according to the longer version of the *Sustance*, recommended himself to Mézières and became one of his apostles for the Order.⁴⁶ As far back as 1393 we find Robert moving between England and France. Indeed, Richard used Robert to inform him of the French king's health.⁴⁷ Robert is mentioned in the *Epistre* six times,

⁴¹ Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, 240–2, citing *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1391–6*, 587; The National Archives E101/402/20 m. 32v.

⁴² "The Wilton Diptych," *Fourteenth-Century Studies*, ed. Lucy Sutherland and May McKisack (Oxford, 1937), 289.

⁴³ I am grateful to Prof. Bell for information. See also his article in this current volume.

⁴⁴ There is a further possible link. Robert the Hermit was associated in 1396 with Waleran, count of St Pol, who was married to Huntingdon's sister.

⁴⁵ Printed in Aziz Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London, 1934), 134.

⁴⁶ Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 479–80.

⁴⁷ Archives Nationales de France J644/35/8, cited in Mirot, "Isabelle" (1904), 555. Richard also used him in 1397–98 on a mission to Rome (Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 488–89). There are also mentions of Robert's presence in England in Froissart's chronicles since in 1395 their visits coincided.

on all occasions emphasising that he was Mézières' source of information on affairs in England, and more specifically on Richard himself.⁴⁸ At the end of the third *matere*, when Mézières is trying to persuade Richard to join with Charles of France in the "sainte passage," and telling him that the Order of the Passion will save him money on such an action, he includes Robert as one of those who can inform him of the truth of this.⁴⁹ This again suggests that recruitment for the Order was underway by the time of the drafting of this section of the *Epistre*.

In this context the *Epistre* was intended in part as the follow up to the *sustance*, which Mézières believed Richard had already seen. There would have been a need to persuade Richard to allow Englishmen to join the Order since they could not campaign overseas without royal permission, not least if the king and his army were engaged in Ireland. There were also the bigger aims of persuading Richard to a joint crusade with Charles and an end to the Schism. But there was another time-specific reason why Mézières should have wished to communicate with Richard at this stage. This is revealed by the fourth *matere* of the *Epistre* (fols. 38v–49v), which can also help us date the work: "Certain mariages affecting the king of England by which the achievement of the long hoped for peace might be hindered, and the remedy therefor." The English marriage plan referred to here surely must be that to Yolanda of Aragon, daughter of King John I. English negotiators had been sent to Aragon between January and March 1395, passing through France. Although we know that John did not intend his daughter to succeed to the throne, Mézières clearly believed that Richard might be attracted to the match "by the immediate hope of increasing and expanding temporal possessions and adding to your lordships." But his real fear, no doubt one shared by the French government, was that the match would act against a solution to the Schism ("should not influence you

⁴⁸ *Letter*, 13/86 (the special messenger between the two kings—"message de dieu singulier as ii. roys"—who has informed the Old Solitary of the "attractive power" of Richard); *ibid.*, 30: 103 (the Old Solitary has been kept well informed by that messenger of God concerning your lofty purpose and valour); *ibid.*, 32: 105 (Richard has already been made aware of the order of the Passion by Robert the Hermit); *ibid.*, 33: 106 (Richard to be informed of the truth of the third reason by Robert the Hermit and the noble knights who are prepared to take part in such an order); *ibid.*, 35 (Old Solitary made aware of your virtues by Robert the Hermit); *ibid.*, 45: 118 (God has sent you Robert the Hermit as a special messenger...for you to take the people to the Promised Land). There are no more references to him after the fifth section.

⁴⁹ *Letter*, 33/105.

to the prejudice of Christendom").⁵⁰ Aragon, like England, supported the Roman pope. We know that the French were extremely concerned by the prospect of the match, not least as Yolanda, then aged fourteen, had previously been promised to Louis II of Anjou, Charles VI's cousin.⁵¹ The English initiative therefore appeared full of aggressive intent, and around late April 1395 we can see the French attempting to buy off the Aragonese to dissuade them from an English marriage.⁵²

The *Epistre* shows clearly that Mézières thought that the English might choose to reopen the war.⁵³ References to the dangers of bad counsel may reflect an awareness (presumably gained through Robert the Hermit) that there were some in England keen to do this, but a reading of the text indicates that Mézières also thought, despite his flattery of Richard as a peacemaker, that the king himself might make such a choice. After all, he must have known (although this is not mentioned any where in the *Epistre* unless we take the rather unusual calling of Richard king of Great Britain as evidence of an awareness of his ambitions beyond England) that Richard was on campaign in Ireland at the very moment that his ambassadors were negotiating with the Aragonese in the early months of 1395.⁵⁴ Indeed, the emphasis on Richard as a man of peace who would attract others to peace by his example has a rather empty ring to it. It is highly likely that Richard was partly to blame for the failure of negotiations in 1394. That he had taken himself to Ireland in September 1394 and was not to return till late May 1395 gave a clear sign that he had no intention to arrange a personal meeting with Charles. The fact that in late March 1394 the truce was extended to Michaelmas 1398 gave a further indication that Richard had no serious desire to resume negotiations.⁵⁵ Mézières began his *Epistre* because he genuinely worried Richard was

⁵⁰ "Sur forme apparant de dilater et accroistre possessions transitoires a vostre seignourie, n'y preigne seignourie, voire ou prejudice de vos freres crestiens," *Letter*, 39/112.

⁵¹ See the contrast drawn by the chronicler Adam Usk: "Astonishing to relate, he proceeded to marry the French king's daughter, even though she was less than seven years old, having refused the daughter and heiress of the king of Aragon, a most beautiful and becoming girl of full age," in *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, ed. Christopher Given-Wilson (Oxford, 1997), 19-20.

⁵² Palmer, "Background," 6.

⁵³ Andrea Tarnowski, "Unity and the *Epistre du roi Richart*," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 26 (1999), 72 emphasises Mézières' urging of Richard not to make war.

⁵⁴ He was absent from England between 29 September 1394 and 30 May 1395. He stood down his army on 21 April 1395.

⁵⁵ *Foedera*, 7:769.

not a man of peace. That is why he made such an excessively flattering effort to tell him that he was.

This raises an interesting point about what Mézières had been told about Richard, presumably by Robert the Hermit. The fourth *matere* of the *Epistre* does not put forward an alternative marriage for Richard. Rather, it urges him to remain chaste in widowhood: that was the *remede*, which Mézières' offered. Was this based upon Robert's report at Richard's grief at Anne of Bohemia's death? We know that Robert was in England shortly after her demise. Shortly before his return from Ireland Richard ordered the demolition of Sheen, where she had died and the preparation of her tomb at Westminster Abbey for her reburial on 26 July 1395.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Richard's desire to associate himself with Edward the Confessor, a deliberately chaste king, was increasing.⁵⁷ Taking this argument further, we can speculate that it was reports on Richard's demeanour which led to the notion that Charles's six-year-old daughter was a suitable bride since Richard would not need to consummate such a marriage for at least another six years until Isabella was twelve.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. Although the *Epistre* was revised in order to encourage the marriage to Isabella, Mézières began it to urge Richard to keep the Anglo-French peace so that the progress the author was making in gaining support for his Order and for a crusade to the East would not be undermined. For the French royal court, however, there were real fears of a renewal of war. Although a truce was still in place to Michaelmas 1398 there had been no further peace negotiations since the spring of 1394. Richard had to be weaned away from an Aragonese marriage. Approaches to him by French envoys began whilst he was still in Ireland and continued until Richard appointed an embassy on 8 July to negotiate his marriage to Isabella. A variety of approaches can be seen. The earliest is reflected in a letter of Richard to Charles, which is undated but must post-date by a few weeks the escorting of French envoys to the king in Ireland in the first week of April.⁵⁸ The French had put forward the possibility

⁵⁶ *Foedera*, 7:795, 797, indentures for making of tomb and images (1 April and 24 April 1395).

⁵⁷ Katherine Lewis, "Becoming a Virgin King: Richard II and Edward the Confessor," in *Gender and Holiness: Men, Women, and Saints in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Samantha Riches and Sarah Salih (London, 2002), 86–100.

⁵⁸ A safe conduct for the envoys to come to England is dated 20 March 1395, *Foedera*, 7: 105. On 3 April a royal sergeant was paid £10 for escorting them from London to the king in Ireland (TNA E403/549 m. 17). See Palmer, "Background," 5.

of a marriage, but the three brides they had offered were on the fringes of the royal family. In an undated letter, which Richard had sent in reply to this offer, he considered all three possible brides “convenable et honourable,” proposing that if he did choose one of them his cousin the earl of Rutland might have another.⁵⁹ Although Richard’s letter notes his intention to send an embassy of Rutland, Huntingdon, the earl of March and either the archbishop of Dublin or the archbishop of Canterbury as well as the royal chamberlain (Sir William Scrope) to France to inspect the women and report back so that on the basis of their report the king “might come to a conclusion with whichever party [i.e. bride] seems best to us,” no embassy was sent at this point.⁶⁰ Richard’s letter to Charles makes brief reference to the French king’s efforts to end the Schism and makes a general offer to do all in his power to assist, but there is no mention of a joint crusade or a proposed meeting of the kings.

A second approach is revealed by a letter of Charles to Richard dated in Paris on 15 May 1395.⁶¹ This letter urged the English king to come to peace for the sake of ending the schism and launching a joint “saint passage.” The language of this letter shows many rhetorical flourishes, and there are many similarities with the *Epistre*, not least in considering that war between England and France has lasted already for sixty years and that there is now a need for peace.⁶² There is also mention of the need for both kings to undertake “le saint passage” to the Holy Land, which would also display the chivalric valour of the English, French and their other Christian brothers as a redemption for sins of the past of the kings and their people. This theme is taken up in other expressions such as “Et benois serront touz les roys qui serront nombrés avecques ceulx qui auront amé la paix en terre.” There is one allusion to Christ’s holy passion (“la moien de sa seinte passioun”) as

⁵⁹ The brides (the daughter of the duke of Bar, daughter of the count of Alençon, the sister of the count of Harcourt) are named, see *Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions*, no. 109. For a full discussion see Palmer, “Background,” 5. The last named was only six years old in 1395. The ages of the others remain uncertain.

⁶⁰ “Pur veer les dites voz cousines et nous ent reportier sur la charge que lour serra de par nous donné pleinement la veritee au fin q’en la dit fait parmy lour report nous purroms proceder a la conclusion qui celle partie nous semblera meillour,” *Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions*, 159.

⁶¹ *Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions*, no. 172. For discussion of this letter, which some historians have considered a forgery, see Palmer, “Background,” 8.

⁶² *Letter*, 6/78.

a force for Christian unity. Reference is also made to a possible meeting of the kings:

Et tresamé frere, prions a Dieu devotement et faisons prier as saintes persones que par sa grace une premire il nous vueille assembler ensemble au pluis brief que ferre se purra bonement, pour laquele assemblée laquele nous desirons parfaitement vous nous troverez touz jours preest et apparelez.

Mézières also mentions in the *Epistre* his hopes for a joint meeting. On fol. 15r for example, he writes “there is nothing lacking to establish, God willing this conjunction (of love between the two powers) save a face-to-face meeting between the two brothers, already attracted to each other.”⁶³ There are therefore many similarities with the text and hopes of the first eight sections of the *Epistre*. It is wholly possible that Mézières was the author of the letter.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the letter ends by asking Richard to let Charles know his pleasure through Robert the Hermit whom Charles was sending (“que nous vous renvoions,” the implication being that Robert had brought the letter to Richard). It also added that Robert would be able to speak further: “a quele Robert l’Ermite tresdouce amé frere, vueillez adjoûter plaine foy de ce q’il vous dirra de par nous.” It is not surprising that there should be no explicit mention of the Order of the Passion. This was a royal letter: the Order was Mézières’ personal idea, not official French royal policy. More significant is the lack of any mention of a royal marriage. If the *Epistre* had been sent with this letter, it would surely be expected that mention should be made of it, and even more of Charles’s offer of his daughter.

We have the English response to this letter although it is undated.⁶⁵ It is in equally flowery language as the French letter of 15 May in terms of the desire for crusade (“ad sanctam passagium”) yet it gives little indication of positive action to that end. There is a reference to the value of “nostrum mutuum colloquium”—a joint discussion—

⁶³ “Et ne fault autre chose pour la confirmacion en Dieu de la dicte conjunction que l’asamblée et presence mutuele des ii. freres ainsi doucement attrais l’un a l’autre,” *Letter*, 14/86.

⁶⁴ Computer-assisted textual analysis could provide elucidation on this.

⁶⁵ This exists in two copies, British Library Cotton Cleopatra DIII folio 203, noted in *Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II*, ed. Edouard Perroy, Camden Society, 3rd series, vol. 48 (London, 1933), 160, and printed in Jules Champollion-Figéac, *Lettres des rois et reines et autres personnages des cours de France et d’Angleterre*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1839–47), 2: 258–60 where it is wrongly dated to 1390, and a later version in All Souls MS 82, printed in *Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions*, no. 173.

although it is expressed so vaguely that it hardly constituted a formal promise to meet. It does, however, mention Robert the Hermit as the bringer of Charles' letter to which the English were now replying. It is likely, therefore, that on his return to France Robert had communicated to the French court the state of play in England. Iorga believed that the *Epistre* was written between the return of Robert from delivering the letter dated 15 May and the first overtures made by Richard for the marriage to Isabella in early July.⁶⁶ This view has much to merit it but in the light of my earlier arguments, we should amend Iorga's "written" to "rewritten." There is much to suggest that Mézières had already drafted the earlier sections of the *Epistre*.⁶⁷ There is the reference to the *sustance* given to Huntingdon and the similarities of argument with the letter of 15 May. Save for the ninth section, the *Epistre* fits with Charles' approach in that letter. It is possible, of course, that the marriage was a matter which Robert the Hermit had been charged to tell Richard directly, and which was to be kept secret. But another interpretation is more likely. That is that Robert's report on England after delivering the letter of 15 May had confirmed fears that Richard was not serious about peace. A new line of approach was needed: this was the offer of marriage to Isabella. It was this which triggered the amendment of the *Epistre*. In this scenario, the work had been intended by Mézières as a fuller exposition for the English king and his court on the Crusade and Order of the Passion, but an essentially private work. Increasing realisation by the French king and his advisers, based on the lack of English action in response to the offer of the three brides, had led to the work being taken under royal sponsorship. Even so, until Robert's return, presumably in late May, emphasis was still on the general themes of the *Epistre*. At that stage the French realised that they had to increase their offer. The work was completed with a new ninth *matere*, the offer of Isabella.

A further letter from Charles dated 28 June mentions information which has come in letters sent by Richard and also through Robert the Hermit.⁶⁸ It mentions that Richard had decided to send ambassadors who were on the point of leaving

⁶⁶ Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières*, 482.

⁶⁷ Palmer, "Background," 10, thinks that it was begun in mid March at the earliest.

⁶⁸ "when the said Robert arrived before us. But for the reasons which we wrote to you through the said Robert and which we had charged him to say to you, the which were and are agreeable to you as your said letters bear witness and as the same Robert

quant le dit Robert arriva par devers nous. Mais pour les causes que nous vous escrimes par le dit Robert et que nous lui avons enchargié vous dire lesquelles vous furent et sont bien agréables comme vos dictes lettres tesmoigne et si comme icellui Robert nous a dit, leur voyage fut retardé dont vous nous pries que nous ne nous vuillons donner merveille.

The English embassy was indeed making its way towards the coast at this point. We have letters from the earl of Rutland and the earl of Nottingham dated at Leeds castle on 26 June.⁶⁹ On 8 July both men, along with the archbishop of Dublin, the bishop of St Davids, John, lord Beaumont and William Scrope were given powers to treat for the marriage of Richard to Isabella, and for Rutland to her sister Jeanne.⁷⁰ It would appear, therefore, that crucial decisions were made by Richard and his advisers in late June to seek this marriage. This may have been in response to the receipt of the *Epistre* earlier in the month.⁷¹

There is a further complication, however. Other than the *Epistre* we have no proof that it was the French who first proposed the marriage. The earliest datable reference to a possible union between Richard and Isabella is in powers given to the English ambassadors on 8 July. There are several indications that it was an English idea, or at least that it was portrayed as such. The preamble of the appointment of the English ambassadors is in high-flown religious prose and addressed to “omnibus Christi fidelibus,” with the implication that the English were genuine in their desire for Christian peace. Froissart also indicates that the approach was from the English. There were many in France who opposed it. Sir Regnault de Corbie, however, urged the council to “receyve this offer and refuse not this treatie.” Froissart adds that the king of France and his council “studyed daye and nyght how they might make this maryage with England to the honour of the realme of France.”⁷² As we have seen, it was a change from the proposed brides offered earlier in the year, although there can be no doubt that that offer had also been made to wean Richard away from an Aragonese marriage. Three possibilities can be advanced. The first is purely practical. There

has told us, their journey was delayed for which you have asked us not to be surprised.” See Archives Nationales de France J 644/35, printed in Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Froissart, Œuvres*, 26 vols. (Brussels, 1867–77), 18: 573–75.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 570–73.

⁷⁰ *Foedera* 7: 802–5.

⁷¹ Robert the Hermit was back in Paris by 26 June, see Palmer, “Background,” 10.

⁷² Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France etc.*, trans. John Berners, 2 vols. (London, 1812–14), 2: 158, 160.

had been an agreement struck in 1391 for Isabella, then aged two, to marry John (b. 9 May 1385), son of Pierre, count of Alençon. It may have taken time for this promise to be renegotiated and Isabella to be offered to Richard.⁷³ Whilst Isabella had younger siblings, Jeanne (b. Jan. 1391), Marie (b. August 1393) and Michelle (b. Jan. 1395) Richard was hardly likely to settle for other than the eldest.

The second possibility is that the offer of Isabella was a personal decision made by Charles. Whilst Froissart claims the idea may have come from the English he spends some time commenting that the king, the duke of Burgundy and the chancellor of France were in favour of the marriage, although others (Berry and Orleans being mentioned specifically) were not.⁷⁴ The fact that Charles' letter of 15 May was different in approach from that sent to Richard offering three possible brides reminds us that there may have been factions at court influencing him at different times and working to different ends. In this interpretation, we must assume close enough relations between Charles and Mézières, perhaps mediated by Robert the Hermit rather than through direct contact between king and author. The latter was devoted to peace but the offer of Isabella can only have come from Charles. In this respect too, Richard was not influenced by the *Epistre* as a whole but by the specific offer of the marriage. This is clearly revealed by the very high demands which he instructed the embassy appointed on 8 July to put forward, which Palmer describes as "breathhtaking." These included nothing less than the restoration of all the gains made by the treaty of Brétigny of 1360, as well as Normandy, Anjou and Maine for the eldest son to be born to Richard and Isabella.⁷⁵ That said, the tone of the appointment of the embassy indicates seriousness, and at the end of the day Richard settled for the financial benefits of a dowry and for a long truce. As suggested earlier, it may not simply have been the potential benefit of a marriage to Charles' daughter, which attracted him but the fact that he would not have to consummate the union for several years to come.⁷⁶ It is also interesting, and significant for our

⁷³ Mirot ("Isabelle" (1904), 553) suggests that the Alençon marriage was dropped because of the decision to offer her to Richard. On 26 June 1396 John of Alençon married the daughter of John IV, duke of Brittany.

⁷⁴ Froissart, trans. Berners, 160.

⁷⁵ Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, 169–70.

⁷⁶ Was he also inspired by the thought of being married to an Isabella, like Edward II, whose canonisation he sought? On 24 April 1395 he had sent to the pope a book of miracles concerning Edward, see Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (Newhaven and London, 1997), 323.

interpretation of Richard, that he wished his closest friend, his cousin the earl of Rutland, aged twenty-two, also to have a child bride in the shape of Isabella's sister then aged five, having previously included the possibility of his marriage in the response to the earlier offer of three potential brides.

There is a third possibility for the date of receipt of the *Epistre* in England. If it *was* the English who first put forward the idea of the marriage to Isabella it is feasible that the work was sent later in the year when it was felt that the English were in danger of not coming to a final conclusion, and Richard needed to be persuaded of the charms of an under-age bride. We know that negotiations for the marriage dragged on for some time, with claims and counter claims, and were not finalised until 11 March 1396 when both a betrothal and a thirty-year truce were agreed.⁷⁷ Even then there was much to discuss before the meeting of the kings at Ardres on 26 October and the marriage at Calais on 4 November.⁷⁸ The delay was also because Isabella needed to be seven before she could give the *verba de presentis*, but after the betrothal she was called queen of England. The English struck a very hard bargain, with a sizeable dowry in cash and jewels.⁷⁹ Furthermore, they ensured that Isabella could not repudiate the marriage when she reached the age of twelve, either at her own behest or as a result of changing relations with France, since they took the precaution of having the papal dispensation for the marriage allow her immediate coronation.⁸⁰ This was a very unusual clause and must reflect the wording of the original English petition to the pope.⁸¹

⁷⁷ *Foedera*, 7: 813–30, ratification by Charles VI of the treaty for the marriage of his daughter Isabel with Richard II, and ratification of a truce between England and France and their allies to Michaelmas 1426.

⁷⁸ Paul Meyer, "L'entrevue d'Ardres," *Annuaire Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France* 18 (1881), 209–24. Since the wedding was held on 4 November, it may have been thought that her birthday fell on that date although it is usually given as 9 November.

⁷⁹ The dowry agreed was 800,000 gold francs worth £133,333 sterling, Jenny Stratford, "Gold and Diplomacy: England and France in the Reign of Richard II," in *England and the Continent in the Middle Ages: Studies in Memory of Andrew Martindale. Proceedings of the 1996 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 2000), 218–37.

⁸⁰ *Foedera*, 7: 836, bull of Boniface IX, 6 August 1396. The execution of the papal bull by the archbishop of York on 3 November refers to her being under age, *ibid.*, 7: 845–46. I am grateful to Dr Stratford for a reminder that the French were extremely anxious to have Isabella returned to France before her twelfth birthday when there were signs that Henry IV was keen to arrange a new marriage to one of his sons.

⁸¹ Also notable is the fact that the dispensation came from the papal chancery not the penitentiary. I am grateful to Dr Peter Clarke for advice on this matter. A dispensation was also sought by the French from the Avignon pope, Benedict XIII, and

The marriage may have begun as the personal wish of King Charles but as time went on there is no doubt that the French were desperate for peace with England because of uncertainties caused by the king's illness, and were prepared to pay for it.⁸² Indeed, we must not forget that around the same time as Isabella's marriage was being negotiated, that of her even younger sister, Jeanne, with the heir to the duchy of Brittany, was also arranged, and that of Yolanda of Aragon to Louis of Anjou reasserted.⁸³ Charles's advisers wished to close off any opportunity for ancient enemies to exploit the realm's weakness. Section nine of the *Epistre* could therefore be read as a desperate piece of persuasion, putting forward a range of inventive arguments on why a six-year-old girl was a suitable bride for Richard, now twenty-eight. Even if Mézières had received reports that Richard might not be in a personal hurry to remarry, he would know that it was not likely that the king would remain unmarried forever. Richard had no heir of his body. Marriage to a minor would postpone any prospect of such for some time to come. Furthermore, it was not English custom for kings to marry minors. Even Mézières himself had spoken against the French custom of child marriage in his *Le songe du vieil pelerin*,⁸⁴ and in his *Le livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*.⁸⁵ Therefore, he had been

issued 26 August 1396: Paris, Archives Nationales J653/13, cited in Mirot, "Isabelle" (1905), 92.

⁸² His main episodes of madness appear to be Aug–Oct. 1392, Jan 1393, June 1393–Jan. 1394, Nov. 1395–Jan. 1396. Palmer, "Background," 13 also emphasises French desperation.

⁸³ The plan for this marriage goes back to 1392, but there was a betrothal ceremony in March 1396 at the same time as that of Richard and Isabelle, noted in *Le Religieux de St Denis, Histoire de Charles VI*, ed. Louis Bellaguet, Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France, 6 vols. (Paris, 1839–52), 2: 413. That did not prevent discussions in July 1396 for her to marry the earl of Rutland, at the same time as there were negotiations for the possible marriage of Charles's fourth daughter, Michelle (born 11 Jan. 1395) to Henry, son of the earl of Derby (the future Henry V, who ended up marrying Charles's youngest daughter, Katherine), see *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 169. Note that Rutland had already contracted in 1381 a marriage at the age of eight with Beatrice of Portugal, which was annulled by papal dispensation a year later, *Complete Peerage*, vol. 12, Part 2, 904.

⁸⁴ In the third quarter of the chessboard analogy, see Coopland, *Songe*, 1: 67 "Such unions are a perversion of nature as the writer claims to have shown in his book, du sacrement de mariage et de reconfort des dames mariees."

⁸⁵ *Philippe de Mézières, Livre du sacrement de mariage*, ed. Joan Williamson (Washington, 1993). Note that this MS, Bibliothèque Nationale de France nouvelle acquisition française 1175, includes a donation scene on folio 1 showing Philippe as a monk, and with a similar IHS image as in the frontispiece of the *Epistre*. The *Livre* is also the first known text in French to narrate the tale of Griselda. See *L'Histoire de Griseldis*

forced to change his stance by royal interest. Neither he nor the French could be sure, however, that Richard and his advisers would agree to the match even if ambassadors had been appointed since many negotiations in the recent past had come to nought. In this respect, therefore, it is not impossible that the *Epistre* was commissioned and re-orientated during the negotiations, or at least the early stages of them, say to the end of 1395, rather than prompting them in the summer of 1395.

We must assume that Mézières regarded his *Epistre* as a success, since a marriage and peace was achieved. The meeting of the kings boded well for the end to the Schism and a joint crusade. But their rapprochement did not end the Schism since the English never fulfilled promises to withdraw their allegiance to the Roman pope, nor did they enter into negotiations needed for a full peace with France as opposed to a truce. The joint crusade also never materialised. Members of Mézières' Order of the Passion (though not, it would seem, the English members since, ironically, they were too busy in the autumn of 1396 with preparations for the meeting of the kings and the royal marriage) fought and died at Nicopolis, the defeat on 25 September effectively curtailing any further initiatives by the Order of the Passion. Richard "was a king who showed little interest in crusading."⁸⁶ If it was the *Epistre's* advice on the marriage to Isabella which Richard heeded, he ignored every other element of it. Mézières surely died a disappointed man. Politics in France became increasingly fraught and violent. Richard II's reign came to a turbulent end within three years of his marriage. Indeed, the impression we have of Richard in the last years of his reign is far from that which Mézières had longed for. Richard was not a man of peace but the very opposite.

en France au xiv^e et xv^e siècle. Two Prose Translations of Petrarch's Latin Paraphrase, one by Philippe de Mézières, the other by an anonymous writer of the 15th C, ed. Il'ya Golenischev-Kutuzov (Paris, 1933). Section 4 of the *Epistre* refers to Griselda.

⁸⁶ James Magee, *Politics, Society and the Crusade in England and France, 1378–1400*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 1998, 108–18. See, however, Maurice Keen, "The Wilton Diptych: The Case for a Crusading Context," *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych*, ed. Dillian Gordon, Lisa Monnas, and Caroline Elam (London, 1997), 189–96.



Epistre au roi Richart. British Library Library Royal 20 B. vi. folio 2r:
presentation miniature.

ENGLISH MEMBERS OF THE ORDER OF THE PASSION:
THEIR POLITICAL, DIPLOMATIC AND
MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE

Adrian Bell*

This essay will attempt to take a fresh look at the career of Philippe de Mézières by considering the English members of his Order of the Passion. By investigating these individuals in detail, can we gain an insight into the practicality and realism of this military order? Much has been written on Mézières, including my own rather naïve thoughts about whether his influence encouraged the involvement of an English force at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396. These speculations included possible connections to Chaucer and the Wilton Diptych and also the “packing” of members of the order into the embassy sent by Richard II in 1395 to negotiate the planned marriage with Isabella, daughter of the King of France.¹ More recently, the worlds of Chaucer and Mézières have been brought much closer by the work of Stefan Vander Elst, who has developed a convincing argument for the portrait of Chaucer’s Knight being based on the military exploits of Mézières himself.² This essay will briefly describe the order and how it was known and publicized in England. It will then investigate the list of English members,

* The essay is an output of the AHRC project, “The Soldier in Later Medieval England.” The project produced an online database of the military service of soldiers for the English Crown between 1369–1453 available to search at the project website (www.medievalsoldier.org). I would like to thank Anne Curry, Tony Moore and David Simpkin for reading and commenting in detail on earlier drafts and of course the conference delegates for useful feedback during and after the presentation.

¹ Adrian R. Bell, “England and the Crusade of Nicopolis 1396,” *Medieval Life: A New Magazine of the Middle Ages* 4 (Spring 1996), 18–22 and Adrian R. Bell, *War and the Soldier in the Fourteenth Century* (Boydell, 2004), 30–31. Further work looked at the military careers of contemporary soldiers to investigate any patterns of service that would give any further insight into this literary creation, Adrian R. Bell, “The Fourteenth Century Soldier—more Chaucer’s Knight or Military Career,” in *Mercenaries and Paid Men: The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. John France (Leiden, 2008), 301–15.

² Stefan Vander Elst, “‘Tu es pèlerin en la sainte cite’: Chaucer’s Knight and Philippe de Mézières,” *Studies in Philology* 106 (2009), 379–401.

to try and identify them and question why they were chosen.³ Finally, it will consider what if anything inclusion on this list signifies?

The Order of the Passion was the grand plan of Philippe de Mézières. He claimed that the idea came to him in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem in 1347, although it was not fully worked up until 1367/8.⁴ As he said himself, he did not just dream up the idea over a drink in a Paris or London tavern.⁵ This is a very modern image, but might this type of justification indicate some of the responses that he was getting to his recruitment drive? He seems to be saying that he had been working on this plan for many years and it should not therefore be dismissed as a madcap idea formulated under the influence of alcohol. Aziz Atiya usefully summarizes its intent as being an "armed league of nations" with the following aims: to end the schism in the Church; to bring peace between England and France; to re-conquer and retain the Holy Land; and to watch over the morals of man.⁶ Philippe revived the Order before 16 September 1394 (the death of Pope Clement VII)—and began a major recruitment drive via his four Evangelists.⁷ One of these, Robert the Hermit, visited England on a number of occasions. Another, Oton de Grandson, had an array of links with England and the English members of the Order.⁸

Maude V. Clarke suggests that a contemporary but abridged version of proposals for the Order was given to John Holland, earl of Huntingdon, stepbrother of Richard II, in Paris in 1394/5.⁹ Mézières himself refers to this event in the *Epistre au Roi Richart*: "which the Old Solitary, humbly and devotedly, handed to your beloved brother, the Count of Huntingdon, to give to you so that you might know the blessings which could result from the establishment of this

³ For the list see: Auguste Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits contenant la règle de la Militia Passionis Jhesu Christi de Philippe de Mézières," *Archives de l'Orient latin* 1 (1881), 335–64 at 362–64. Both Aziz Atiya, *Crusade of Nicopolis* (London, 1934), Appendix II, 133–35 and Clarke, Maude V. Clarke, "The Wilton Diptych," *Fourteenth Century Studies* (London, 1937), 288, utilize this printed source for their lists. I have a digital copy of the list from the original Arsenal manuscript and can confirm that the transcript provided by Molinier is accurate.

⁴ Abdel Hamid Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion." Part 1, *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts*, 18 (Alexandria, 1964), 1–54.

⁵ Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières," Part 1, 51.

⁶ Aziz S. Atiya, *The Crusade in the later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), 14.

⁷ Clement VII is named in this redaction of the Order.

⁸ John J.N. Palmer, "The Background to Richard II's Marriage to Isabel of France (1396)," *Historical Research* xlv (1971), 1–17, at 9.

⁹ Clarke, "The Wilton Diptych," 288–89.

Order.”¹⁰ From the earl’s movements, as reconstructed from English government records, the claim that this copy of the Rule was presented to Holland seems plausible. It can be quite closely dated to the turn of the year as Holland was passing through France on his return from a diplomatic mission to Hungary.¹¹ He joined Richard in Ireland on 10 February 1395 and was paid for his military service from 8 March to 21 April 1395.¹² As corroboration for this schedule, the watermark on the paper of the manuscript, according to Clarke, dates the rules to 1395.¹³

This document, *La Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion de Jhesu Crist en Francois*, is now held as Bodleian Library Ashmole 813 in the Bodleian Library in Oxford.¹⁴ Clarke describes these rules as “propaganda” and the illustrations do lend the document the feel of a modern marketing brochure with representations of the various robes of the Order and even an illustration of the robes that would be worn by the wife of a member. These are placed at the front of the manuscript, perhaps to provoke the readers’ interest, before moving onto the rules.

Mézières was financially astute, as can be seen from his careful planning of the funding for the crusade that the Order would undertake. From his longer treatment of the rules of the order, *De la Chevalerie de la Passion de Jhesu Crist*, it can be seen that the fundraising was based on what we could nowadays call a reverse pyramid scheme, involving 7,000 members in total, in order to raise over 3 million francs.¹⁵ As an example of the sums expected from members, a knight of the order

¹⁰ *Philippe de Mézières: Letter to Richard II: A Plea made in 1395 for Peace between England and France*, ed. G. W. Coopland (Liverpool, 1975), 32, 105.

¹¹ For his preparations for this embassy including protection and appointment of attorney see, Thomas Rymer, *Foedera, conventiones, litterae et cujuscunque generic acta publica*, 20 vols. (London, 1704–35), 7: 764.

¹² *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1391–6*, 587, order for shipping to convey him to Ireland; The National Archives [TNA] E 101/402/20, f32v, wardrobe account, wages for 55 soldiers (15 men-at-arms, 1 earl, 4 knights, 40 archers).

¹³ Clarke, “The Wilton Diptych,” 289, but with no reference to explain this assertion.

¹⁴ I have not been able to personally view the manuscript, but six illustrations showing the order members in their robes, and the banner of the order are available to browse via the Bodleian Library website, Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts section (http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/view/search;jsessionid=F166DD2DAE4D050D16CBC3DE65D88E60?q=ashmole+813&sort=Shelfmark%2CFolio_Page&search=Search—accessed 26/5/10).

¹⁵ This longer manuscript containing the third redaction of the rule of the order is in Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Arsenal, ms. 2251. Hamdy describes the content, the relationship between the documents and provides a transcription of the full rule in Abdel Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion,” Part 2 and 3, *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts* 18 (Alexandria, 1964), 1–105.

would pay around 500 francs, depending on the length of intended service, with the higher orders of society paying more.¹⁶

So can we judge whether this proposed Order and crusade were realistic from a financial perspective? An insight is offered by looking at an episode from the career of an English member of the order, discussed in more detail below, Sir John Harleston. It seems that Mézières knew Harleston personally, as he describes Harleston in *the Epistre* to Richard II as someone who will be able to explain further the benefits of the order.¹⁷ The St Albans chronicle describes how Harleston was captain of the English garrison of Cherbourg in 1379 and led a raid to gather plunder. The expedition ran into some local difficulties:

Sir John Harleston commander in chief of the English was the first to fall; he attacked the French with courage, but was horribly cut down and pitifully laid low, a host of the enemy surrounding him like bees. So he was overwhelmed, thrown to the ground, crushed beneath the feet of men and horses and left there half-dead.¹⁸

Fortunately for Harleston, a counter attack by his garrison defeated the French and many of his attackers were taken prisoner. One of these prisoners, Sir William de Bordes, was then ransomed for the princely sum of 30,000 francs, of which Harleston would have received a third as his share.¹⁹ So for Harleston 500 francs would not have been a lot of money, particularly following this windfall, and it likewise follows that if a French knight could get access to 30,000 francs to pay his ransom then such a request for 500 francs is realistic. It therefore seems that de Mézières planned and pitched his recruitment for the Order with a soundly crafted financial plan.²⁰ Whether he would be able to recruit enough knights or whether the budget would be sufficient remains a question.

¹⁶ Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières," Part 2 and 3, 23–24.

¹⁷ *Letter to Richard II*, 32, 105.

¹⁸ *The St Albans Chronicle: The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham, 1376–1396*, vol. 1, ed. John Taylor, Wendy R. Childs and Leslie Watkiss (Oxford, 2002), 283–89.

¹⁹ *CPR 1377–81*, 495, 543, 549. The ransom and associated claims are dealt with in a very complicated part-exchange deal including the Count of St. Pol held in England and Sir Thomas Felton held prisoner in France.

²⁰ It should also be noted that the Duke of Milan had promised to support the order to the tune of 30,000 florins, Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits contenant la règle de la Militia Passionis Jhesu Christi de Philippe de Mézières," 362–64. Mézières believed his scheme could save money for the Kings of England and France, *Letter to Richard II*, 33, 106. Thanks to Anne Curry for reference, and see her essay in this volume for expansion of this theme.

Let us now investigate the membership list of the Order of the Passion. This is found attached to the third redaction of the rule, but it was not included in the abridged version given to the earl of Huntingdon. The manuscript of the third redaction was formerly in the possession of the Celestines in Paris (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS 2251). The manuscript mentions the year 1396 and thus the rule is dated to this year and Hamdy argues that it was compiled before the battle of Nicopolis on 25 September 1396.²¹ This would also place it before the marriage of Richard II and Isabella on 4 November 1396. The list begins on folio 112 and continues to the end of the manuscript on folio 114. It is headed by Mézières' four evangelists, who would spread the message and recruit the members. These were Robert the Hermit, Sir Jean de Blaisy, Sir Louis de Gyach and Sir Oton de Granson. It then lists, in order of their nationality, the 60 men who had promised to become knights of the Passion (and perhaps agreed to fund the order) beginning with France (23), Spain (2), Aragon (2), Gascony (3), Navarre (5), Germany (1), England (22) and Scotland (2). It then moves onto the 27 men who had promised to support the order, beginning again with those from France (18), Lombardy (1), the Church (5) and England (3).

The list itself is problematic, as we cannot be sure that it is anything other than a figment of Mézières' imagination. There is no known supporting evidence from any of the English members to confirm that they had promised to join or support the order.²² Christopher Tyerman states that, "the cohesion and enthusiasm of the order may only have existed in Mézières mind."²³ However, we can judge whether the list was realistic through an investigation of its composition.

Before moving on it is instructive to look at the number of members of the order, as so much has been written on its importance. Are these

²¹ Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières," Part 2 and 3, 2.

²² Professor Philippe Contamine, in conversation at the conference in Cyprus where this essay was first presented, confirmed that in addition no known corroborative evidence exists for any of the Frenchmen named on the list. Professor Contamine has also investigated the members of the order in a recently published essay, which he has kindly sent to me, see Philippe Contamine, "Les princes, barons et chevaliers qui a la chevalerie au service de Dieu se sont ja vouez." *Recherches prosopographiques sur l'ordre de la Passion de Jésus-Christ (1385–1395)*, in *La noblesse et la croisade à la fin du Moyen Age* (France, Bourgogne, Bohême), eds. Martin Nejedlý and Jaroslav Svatek, with the collaboration of Daniel Baloup, Benoît Joudiou and Jacques Paviot, (Toulouse: Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, 2009), 43–67.

²³ Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades* (London, 1988), 295.

numbers impressive? As we have seen, the French and English, with 23 and 22 members respectively, were by far the greatest supporters of the order. However, Froissart claimed that the tournament at St Ingelvert in 1390 attracted 120 English knights and esquires.²⁴ We also know that for his expedition to Ireland in 1394, a contemporary event, Richard II took 3653 soldiers, including 944 men-at-arms (2 dukes, 4 earls, 18 bannerets and 137 knights).²⁵ In this light, recruiting just 20 members from England does not seem like a great return for Mézières' marketing efforts (as he expected to recruit 7,000). We may perhaps speculate that he would have been quite disappointed with the numbers of supporters he had managed to attract to his new order.

Nevertheless, the membership of the order is significant. Mézières was interested in peace between England and France, an end to the schism, and launching a new crusade. To achieve this he supported a marriage between Richard and Isabella of France (which indeed took place) and he promoted his Order of the Passion. We know, both from his marriage to Isabella and from his wider foreign policy, that Richard was interested in peace. But it is less clear how supportive the English king was of the proposed crusade or an end to the schism. Can the membership list serve as evidence of the level of enthusiasm for these further ideas in England and thus help us to judge the level of support for such initiatives?

It is perhaps surprising that the English supporters of the Order have not been identified in full.²⁶ Table 1 shows my reconstruction of the list. Most of the members are easy to identify. The duke of York, earl of Rutland and earl of Nottingham along with the duke of Gloucester, duke of Lancaster and earl of Huntingdon, were all related to Richard and in these cases there can be no doubt to whom the list refers.²⁷ The earl of Northumberland and the Bishop of St David's are also clear. Some of the names are not easy to identify and one or two previous

²⁴ Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. and trans. Thomas Johnes (1874), 2: 434–46.

²⁵ TNA, E 101/402/20, folios 33v–38v. Thanks to David Simpkin for advice on this source and these numbers.

²⁶ See Contamine, "Les princes, barons et chevaliers qui a la chevalerie au service de Dieu se sont ja vouez," 53–55, for brief biographical details of most of the English members, upon which we independently agree.

²⁷ Mézières describes the Kings uncles, father, and grandfather as Black Boars in his letter to Richard II. It is therefore perhaps slightly surprising to find York, Gloucester and Lancaster in amongst the membership of the order of the Passion, see *Letter to Richard II*, xix, 14, 20, 86–7, 92.

Table 1: Englishmen named on the list

De Mezieres list	Identification
<i>Those who promised to be knights</i>	
Le duc d'Youlc, oncle du roy d'Engleterre	Edmund of Langley, duke of York (earl of Cambridge)
le counte de Ruteland, filz du dit duc	Edward, earl of Rutland, (duke of Aumale, York)
Le conte Mareschal	Thomas Mowbray, earl of Nottingham, earl Marshal (duke of Norfolk)
le conte de Nortomberlande	Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland
Mons l'evesque de Saint David	John Gilbert, Bishop of St Davids
Mons le Despensier	Thomas, Lord Despencer (earl of Gloucester)
Mons Huc le Despensier	Sir Hugh Despencer
Mons Loys Clifford	Sir Louis Clifford
Mons Thomas West	Sir Thomas West
Mons Guillaume Helemann	Sir William Elmham
Mons Jehan Harlestone	Sir John Harlestone
Mons Guillaume Feniston	Sir William Faringdon
Mons Raoul de Persy	Sir Ralph Percy
Mons Hervy filz Hue	Sir Henry Fitz Hugh
Mons Symon Felbrig	Sir Simon Felbrigg
Mons Richart Albery	Sir Richard Abberbury
Mons Hervy Guine	Sir Henry Green
Mons Thomas Herpignen	Sir Thomas Erpingham
Mons de Rochfort	Sir Ralph Rochfort
Mons Robert Morley	Sir Robert Morley
Piteaux, esquire	William Peyto
Richard Chelmesinch, esquire du Roy	Richard Chelmswick
<i>those who promised to support the order</i>	
Le duc de Glocestre, oncle du roy	Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester
Le du de Lencastre	John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster
Le conte de Nornthone, frere du roy d'Engleterre	John Holland, earl of Huntingdon (duke of Exeter)

identifications may well be incorrect. When such identifications are questionable, the methodology for choosing an individual as the member of the order of the passion is set out below.

First, given that the most prominent men named on the list had close links to Richard II, it makes sense to begin by asking whether

any of these other, less easily identifiable men also had close personal links to the king. A second consideration is whether any of these men had links to crusading activities, an important point given that the list was drawn up in connection with plans for a crusade. Finally, it has also been necessary to consider the wider horizons of these men, on military campaigns and elsewhere, in a bid to identify them more precisely.

The first problem on the list is to identify Monsieur le Despenser, as the Christian name is omitted. Some help is provided by the next listed member, Sir Hugh Despencer, as the previous entry cannot therefore be referring to him.²⁸ The most likely identification is Thomas, Lord Despencer, who was close to Richard II and was later (1397) to be created earl of Gloucester.²⁹ The next difficulty is Monsieur Guillaume Helemann, but this can be anglicized to Sir William Elmham without taking too many liberties.³⁰ Sir Guillaume Feniston presents more of a problem. The nearest knight to fit the profile for membership on the list is Sir William Faringdon.³¹ Since no other records could be found for any Englishman named Sir William Feniston at this time, this identification also appears safe. So does that for Monsieur Richart Alberly who becomes Sir Richard Abberbury.³²

Another missing Christian name, Monsieur de Rochfort, is a difficult identification. The most likely suspect is Sir Ralph de Rochefort, who has been preferred because he joined the earl of Derby on his expedition to Prussia in the early 1390s. However, either Henry or

²⁸ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 108. He was the nephew of Bishop Henry Despencer of Norwich. For family tree see Richard Allington-Smith, *Henry Despenser: the Fighting Bishop* (Fakenham, 2003), viii.

²⁹ Thomas Pugh, 'Despenser, Thomas, second Lord Despenser (1373–1400)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7555, accessed 20 May 2009].

³⁰ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 184–85.

³¹ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 20.

³² Simon Walker, 'Sir Richard Abberbury (c. 1330–1399) and his Kinsmen: the rise and fall of a gentry family,' *Nottingham Medieval Studies* xxxiv (1990), 113–140, making the same association at p. 133 for Sir Richard *le filz*. The father and son have the same name and are active at the same time, making dividing their careers very tricky. See also Simon Walker, 'Abberbury family (*per. c.1270–c.1475*),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, January 2008) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/54517, accessed 20 May 2009] described as Richard [iii] Abberbury and J.S. Roskell, L. Clarke and C. Rawcliffe eds., *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1386–1421* (Stroud, 1992), 1: 15–17, described as Adderbury, Richard II (d. 1416).

John de Rochefort, both of whom were militarily active at this time (although John, Ralph's elder brother, was not knighted until 1400) are also possible.³³ The final man on the list, Richard Chelmesinch, esquire du Roy, can be identified very definitely as Richard Chelmswick, as he was indeed made king's esquire in 1388 and he has been considered a "favored retainer of the king."³⁴ The most problematic member from the orthography of the list is Piteaux, esquire.³⁵ The most realistic candidate is William Peyto. He was suitably active militarily and had shared experiences with a number of the other members.³⁶

This essay does not intend to deal directly with what Richard II himself may have thought about the ideas of Mézières. Instead, it will consider whether an analysis of the careers and connections of the list of members can shed light on the wider responses to the Order of the Passion in England.³⁷ In other words, did the members of the Order have common patterns of diplomatic service, military participation, crusading or pilgrimage activities, or particular relationships with Richard II or other leading magnates? And if we can find such patterns, then what can this tell us about how Mézières' ideas were actually received in England?

A good place to start is with how other historians have used the membership list as an indication of the character of the Order or of its reception in England. For instance, Simon Walker assigned the Abberbury family to an "international chivalric class, by virtue of their extensive military and diplomatic experience."³⁸ K. B. McFarlane grouped Sir Lewis Clifford with a number of knights, who "belonged

³³ *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land made by Henry, earl of Derby, in the Years 1390–1 and 1392–3*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith (London, 1874), 265, 303. *History of Parliament*, vol. 4, 219–221, for Rochford, John (d. 1410).

³⁴ *History of Parliament*, 1: 538–39, as Chelmswick, Richard (d. 1398).

³⁵ Thank you to Chris Given-Wilson and Nigel Saul for confirming that no realistic candidate has so far been associated with Piteaux.

³⁶ This identification was made by thinking laterally and trying out different pronunciations of the name in a Soldier project team meeting (Anne Curry, Adam Chapman, Andy King and David Simpkin). I cannot recall who came up with William Peyto, but I know that I cannot claim the credit, having already agonised for a lengthy period without a breakthrough.

³⁷ For a reinterpretation of Richard's outlook see the essay by Anne Curry in this volume, which argues that Richard was interested in peace with France, thus the marriage in 1396, but by his lack of action would appear to be less interested in crusade or an end to the schism.

³⁸ Walker, "Sir Richard Abberbury and his Kinsmen," 113.

to the international chivalrous class and spoke its lingua franca.”³⁹ Both these examples are relevant for our current argument because Sir Richard Abberbury and Sir Lewis Clifford had promised to become members of the Order of the Passion. Walker proceeds to use the membership of the order to show that “Abberbury was clearly interested and involved in the fashionable Anglo-French efforts to revive Crusading enthusiasm.”⁴⁰ Tyerman, writing about the earl of Huntingdon’s membership of the order, comments that “as Holland soon became a patron of this order, his concern with the crusade was certainly more than casual; it appealed to his spirit of adventure, as well as to his sense of Christian duty and knightly responsibility,” and “from Holland’s case it is easy to believe that the holy war satisfied baser as well as nobler human instincts; therein lay part of its tenacity.”⁴¹ On occasion historians have also used membership of the order to show that an individual was a militarily active crusader. Thus Peter Fleming, when discussing Sir Lewis Clifford, states that “certainly by 1396, Clifford was elected to the Passion, an international crusading order based in France,” and K. B. McFarlane argued that his “election” was “evidence of his martial reputation.”⁴² Maurice Keen suggests that members would be encouraged to turn this military expertise to achieve higher aims, stating that “the object of his Order of the Passion was to draw men out of worldly service in to salvific chivalrous service.”⁴³ Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski reinforces this theme, demonstrating that Philippe himself, reflecting on the disaster at Nicopolis, argued in 1397 that, “his new rule is the only cure for Europe’s diseased chivalry, the only means that will allow them a decisive victory over the Turks.”⁴⁴

It has also been suggested that membership of the order reflected a high Ricardian bias as Maurice Keen comments that the names of the

³⁹ K.B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), 179.

⁴⁰ Walker, “Sir Richard Abberbury and his Kinsmen,” 133.

⁴¹ Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 263–64.

⁴² Peter Fleming, “Clifford, Sir Lewis (c.1330–1404)” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50259>, accessed 20 May 2009]; McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*, 178–79.

⁴³ Maurice Keen, “Chaucer and Chivalry Re-visited,” in Matthew Strickland, ed., *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France. Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1998), 1–12, at 9.

⁴⁴ Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, “Philippe de Mézières’s Ghostly Encounters from the *Vie de Saint Pierre de Thomas* (1366) to the *L’Epistre Lamentable* (1397),” *Romania* 127 (2009), 168–89, at 183.

order "include a number of Richard's close and courtly intimates."⁴⁵ The actions of his closest courtiers have then been used as a proxy for Richard's own, unstated, political opinions, suggesting that the king too would have been in favor of the teachings of Mézières. A similarly indirect approach to Richard II's own ideas has used the portrait drawn by Chaucer's Knight, with his lack of experience in the Hundred Years War, contrasted with lots of (what can be loosely termed) crusading activity.⁴⁶ The compelling imagery of the Wilton Diptych has also been used as a means of entry into the enigmatic king's *mentalité*, in particular concerning his support for a joint crusade. Clarke has argued that "a crusading picture with the liveries of England and France united and executed between 1396 and 1399 cannot be traced to any other origin than Mézières' propaganda for the Order of the Passion."⁴⁷

Reflecting on these views of historians, we need to take great care with any statement made regarding the list of members and its significance. As we have noted, there is no evidence to show that this list of names, was indeed anything other than a list. The included names may have been used with more than a pinch of poetic license, and it is clear that even to suggest "election" to the membership of the Order is an overstatement. To move the debate forward, the remaining part of this essay will think carefully about how the list may have been compiled and just who the English members were.

Of course, the best evidence of real interest in the crusade would be shown by actions. Unfortunately, despite arguments to the contrary, no English individual has been shown to have participated in the contemporary crusade to Nicopolis. In fact, the wedding of Richard II and Isabella, supported by Mézières, meant that the English had another more important engagement.⁴⁸ A number of candidates have been advanced for English participants at Nicopolis, but without conclusive evidence to back up a convincing case.⁴⁹ The only candidate

⁴⁵ Maurice Keen, "Chaucer's Knight, the English Aristocracy and the Crusade," in *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, eds. V. J. Scattergood and J. W. Sherborne (London, 1983), 45–61 at 57.

⁴⁶ Bell, "England and Nicopolis."

⁴⁷ Clarke, "Wilton Diptych," 292 and John J. N. Palmer, *England France and Christendom 1377–99* (London, 1972), 242–44. See also Dillian Gordon, *Making and Meaning: The Wilton Diptych* (London, 1993) and Maurice Keen, "The Wilton Diptych: The Case for a Crusading Context," *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych*, eds. Dillian Gordon, Lisa Monnas and Caroline Elam (London, 1997), 189–96.

⁴⁸ Thanks to Professor Anne Curry for this insight.

⁴⁹ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 106–7 for summary of this debate.

that can seriously be suggested is Ralph Percy (who had promised to join the Order), who left England in 1396 and died on 15 September 1397 whilst overseas.⁵⁰ Mézières himself, in retrospect, did not support the crusade to Nicopolis. He might have been pleased that the English members of the order had followed his advice. As James Magee comments, “in his 1396 redaction of the Order of the Passion, Mézières was disdainful of the Nicopolis Crusade.”⁵¹ The French members of the order were not so respectful of his wishes and many travelled to Nicopolis in support of the crusade, notably Boucicaut, Marshal of France, Henri de Bar, Enguerrand de Coucy, Jean de Vienne, Admiral of France, and Philippe d’Artois, Constable of France. Even Jean de Blaisy, one of the evangelists, crusaded and was killed, returning as a ghost to tell Mézières of their folly.⁵²

An examination of some of the practicalities behind the compilation of the list may also be valuable. It appears that Mézières wanted his four evangelists to recruit the members of his order. How would this have worked in practice? Sir Oton de Granson was a key networker within England. He was a retainer of Richard II, with an annual grant of £200, and also of John of Gaunt.⁵³ In addition, it can be shown that he also had key personal connections with other members of the Order, perhaps demonstrating his hand in their recruitment. Two of these, namely Abberbury and Green, were also retainers of John of Gaunt, before being similarly retained by Richard II, thus displaying a similar pattern of service and reward.⁵⁴ Further, Granson shared a warrant for a letter of protection with Erpingham when going to Calais in 1379, suggesting that this relationship was particularly close.⁵⁵ Granson also

⁵⁰ Palmer, *England France and Christendom 1377–99*, 240.

⁵¹ James Magee, “Crusading at the Court of Charles VI, 1388–1396,” *French History* 12 (1998), 367–83, at 380.

⁵² Molinier, 362–4: “Mons Le mareschal de France, Bouciquaut; Mons Phelipe d’Artoiz, connestable de France; Mons de Coucy; Mons Henry de Bar; Monseigneur Jehan de Blezi.” For de Blaisy as ghost, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, “Philippe de Mézières’s Ghostly Encounters,” 168, 184–85, 188.

⁵³ Simon Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity, 1361–1399* (Oxford, 1990), 105 citing CPR 1391–1396, 63, 342. Chris Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King’s Affinity. Service, Politics and Finance in England 1360–1413* (London, 1986), 285.

⁵⁴ Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, 262, 270; Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 282, 285.

⁵⁵ Despite historical citation that Richard Abberbury was also named on this protection warrant in 1379, on investigation of the source, this entry was found to refer to a Nicholas Abberbury. It is possible that Nicholas was a scribal error for Richard,

went on two years later to serve with Edmund of Langley, duke of York, on his Portuguese expedition.⁵⁶ Granson also accompanied the earl of Derby on his crusade to Prussia and his pilgrimage to the Holy Land and thus would have come into close contact with Abberbury, Erpingham, Rochfort, and Chelmswick.⁵⁷ Therefore, in addition to his ties to Richard II, Gaunt and Derby, Granson also had personal networks with five of the English members. Of the other evangelists, Robert the Hermit visited England twice, as recorded by Froissart, while Jean de Blaisy was involved in French diplomacy with England, but we do not have further evidence whether they came into personal contact with any of the recruited members.⁵⁸

Another line of inquiry concerns the age profile of the English members of the Order. In particular, since Richard II was reasonably young at 28 years old in 1396, do the ages of the other members reflect his own image? Some of the members were certainly of a similar age. The earl of Rutland and Lord Despenser were both 23, whilst Thomas Mowbray, Fitzhugh and Morley were in their early thirties. However, the rest of the membership were older, ranging from 40 to the veteran Lewis Clifford at 60 years old. This gives a median average of 41, where the age of the member is known and perhaps demonstrates that rather than being a group of friends and peers of the young king, the order was really composed of more experienced members of the English military community.

and this may gain some support as we were not able to find any other person of that name in the records of military service for this period. Simon Walker, "Sir Richard Abberbury and his Kinsmen," 127–28, repeated in *History of Parliament*, vol. 1, 15. Calais: TNA C 81/988 (1).

⁵⁶ Once again, it has been stated that Abberbury was also on this campaign, but close investigation of the relevant treaty rolls has failed to find this entry. TNA C 76/65 m. 7. Thanks to David Simpkin for this information and previous note. We did find an entry for Richard Abberbury acting as an attorney for another soldier on the Portugal campaign. It would appear unlikely that he would do this if he was on the campaign himself, as he would not be of much use looking after the affairs of another in England.

⁵⁷ *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land*, Index, 319 for mentions of Granson.

⁵⁸ Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, 188. For more on the evangelists see, Philippe Contamine and Jacques Paviot, eds., *Une Epistre lamentable and consolatoire adressee en 1397 à Philippe le Hardi, duc de Bourgogne, sur la défaite de Nicopolis (1396)* (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 2008), Annexe I, 83–90. Thank you to Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Anne Curry for this reference.

Table 2: Kings knights

Kings Knight Richard II	Kings Knight Henry IV
earl marshal	
Lord Despencer	
Hugh Despencer	Hugh Despencer
Clifford	
West	
Elmham	Elmham
Harlestone	
Faringdon	Faringdon
Ralph Percy	
Felbrigg	Felbrigg
Green	
Chelmswick (Kings esquire)	
earl of Huntingdon	
	Fitz Hugh
	Erpingham
	Ralph Rochfort

Another key question concerns the loyalties demonstrated by the members of the Order, most obviously in terms of whether they supported Richard II or the usurper Henry IV in 1399. For example, it is possible to look at which of the members were made king's knights of either or both kings. This will allow us to determine whether the membership of the Order can be described as Ricardian. As I have previously noted in my own work looking at the Appellant led expeditions of 1387–88, the specific loyalties of individuals are hard to pin down, especially when considered over the whole course of a career.⁵⁹ Should we really be surprised if someone moves political orbit following or during a change of regime? We can see from Table 2 that thirteen of the members were associated as king's knight under Richard II. Following the deposition, seven of the members were retained by Henry IV.⁶⁰ And of these, four men served as king's knights under both kings. Whilst half of the members were directly retained by Richard, and this is perhaps instructive, the continuation of service into the reign of his cousin—directly in some cases—demonstrates that these men were pragmatic with their political decision making.

⁵⁹ Bell, *War and the Soldier*.

⁶⁰ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*.

Table 3: Other Loyalties

Pardons 1398	1399 Richard	1399 Henry
	duke of York (defence)	
	earl of Rutland (Ireland)	earl of Northumberland
	Lord Despencer (killed 1400)	
	Hugh Despencer (defence)	
West		
Elmham	Elmham (defence)	
Fitz hugh		
Felbrigg	Felbrigg (Ireland)	
Abberbury		
Green	Green (killed 1399)	Erpingham
Morley		
Peyto		
Chelmswick	earl of Huntingdon (Ireland and killed 1400)	

What else can we discover about the political activities of the membership of the Order? Most notably, nine of the members needed to secure a pardon in 1398, at a time when Richard was supposedly settling old scores against his opponents from the political struggle of 1386–1389. Research into these pardons has demonstrated that they have a high correlation with military activities during the Appellant supremacy, even though many of the pardons recorded on these rolls do not specifically say why they are taken.⁶¹ Caroline Barron has argued that such pardons demonstrate that Richard acted tyrannically at this time.⁶² It is therefore perhaps surprising that nine of the members of the Order felt the need to obtain such royal pardons just a couple of years after the membership list for the order of the Passion was drawn up, to excuse their behavior in the preceding decade. This is the first piece of evidence that challenges the perceived “Ricardian” bias of the membership list. How can this be a list of Ricardian followers and intimates if they required such pardons?⁶³

⁶¹ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 128–35.
⁶² Caroline M. Barron, “The Tyranny of Richard II,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* xli (1968), 1–18.
⁶³ TNA C67/30, 31.

Can the later actions of these individuals throw any more light on their motivations? From Table 3 above, we can see that three members were in Ireland with Richard in 1399, whilst a further three members of the Order were among those entrusted with the defense of the realm against the future Henry IV. Sir William Elmham famously had to be disarmed before he would surrender to the usurper. Further, Green was given special attention and immediately executed for his support of Richard. Thomas, Lord Despencer, and the earl of Huntingdon were both killed in the aftermath of the failed Epiphany plot in support of the captured king in 1400. Countering this demonstration of fidelity to Richard, two members of the list, namely the earl of Northumberland and Sir Thomas Erpingham, both supported Henry in his invasion of 1399. The earl of Northumberland, despite his initial support for Derby, would later become a less trusted colleague of the new King, rebelling against him on three occasions between 1403 and 1408.

Moving away from the premise that composition of the membership list had a particular political significance, does other evidence

Table 4: Chivalry, Crusade and Piety

Garter	Tournament	Prussia	Holy Land	Other
duke of York				
earl of Rutland				
earl marshal	earl marshal		earl marshal	
earl of	earl of			
Northumberland	Northumberland			
Lord Despencer		Lord Despencer		
	Hugh Despencer	Hugh Despencer		
Clifford	Clifford			
West				
		Harleston		
		Ralph Percy	Ralph Percy	
Fitz Hugh		Fitz Hugh		Fitz Hugh
Felbrigg				
		Abberbury	Abberbury	Abberbury
Erpingham		Erpingham	Erpingham	
		Ralph Rochfort	Ralph Rochfort	
		Chelmswick	Chelmswick	
duke of Gloucester				
duke of Lancaster				
earl of Huntingdon	earl of		earl of	earl of
	Huntingdon		Huntingdon	Huntingdon
13		9	7	

exist to explain the Order's membership in England? For example, participation in tournaments may indicate the chivalric element behind membership in the Order. We can find support for at least five of the individuals named in the membership taking part in such events, and indeed Froissart reports that Huntingdon was half-killed at St Ingelvert in 1390. He seems to have improved his technique and was awarded the honors alongside his brother in law, the Count of St Pol (and future French member of the Order of the Passion) at the first day of the subsequent tournament held at Smithfield. Hugh Despencer managed to gain the honors on the second day of the same tournament.⁶⁴ Moreover, a further clear example of interest in chivalric activity is suggested by the fact that thirteen of the listed members of the Order were also (or would be) members of the Order of the Garter. This is a strong message, but what does it mean? Like the evidence for king's knights, it is not just a chivalric measure but also demonstrates a closeness to the king himself. This is therefore a problematic indicator and would need further unraveling. To look at just one instructive example, Sir Simon Felbrigg was a favorite of Richard II and yet survived the change of regime, remaining in the Order of the Garter. John Milner has suggested that his friendship with a neighbor and another member of the Orders of the Passion and of the Garter, Sir Thomas Erpingham, a Lancastrian intimate, saved him from a worse fate. Milner proceeds to also outline that although Felbrigg regularly attended Garter chapters from 1419–1429, he felt slighted when he was the only member not told of a change in date of the meeting in 1430. As a result he remained a member of the Order of the Garter but excused himself from all remaining meetings until his death in 1442.⁶⁵

As we have noted, inclusion on the list has been used as evidence for an interest in crusading. Indeed, a number of the members had been on crusade with the Teutonic knights. However, this indicator may be skewed by the expedition led by Henry, earl of Derby. This also introduces further complications to our understanding of the membership list by highlighting that many members were linked with Henry, earl of Derby during the early 1390s. In addition, others went to Prussia independently of Henry. For instance, Thomas Despencer traveled with

⁶⁴ Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. and trans. Johnes (1874), 2: 479.

⁶⁵ John D. Milner, "Sir Simon Felbrigg, K.G.: The Lancastrian Revolution and Personal Fortune," *Norfolk Archaeology* 37 (1978), 84–91.

Lords Clifford, FitzWalter and Bouchier. This visit became infamous because of the scrap with the Scottish knight, Sir William Douglas, in a church in Königsberg. As the expedition took place during the Schism in the Church, the Roman priest would not allow Scottish schismatics to join his mass. As a result, a melee broke out and Douglas was killed outside by the English. The fight then escalated on national lines, depending upon which side of the schism each nation supported. The English were joined by men from Germany and Holland, while the French supported the Scots. The fighting only ceased after the intervention of a prominent French knight.⁶⁶ As well as these crusades to the Baltic, as shown on Table 4, a fair number of English members of the Order had visited the Holy Land on pilgrimage.

Commitment to the crusading cause and personal piety can be seen to be very important to one or two members of the order. Sir Henry Fitzhugh sent arms (bow and arrows) to Prussia and to the recently-built castle of St Peter in Bodrum (modern Turkey) in 1408–9.⁶⁷ Sir Richard Abberbury provides an interesting example of extreme interest in pilgrimage. It has been argued that he left England because he had lost influence following the change of regime. However, it seems he was on pilgrimage in 1408, liquidating his real estate to pay for it, mainly to Thomas Chaucer.⁶⁸ Abberbury was also known at the French court, as Oliver de Clisson had bragged to him in 1389 about how he had freed Charles VI from the control of his uncles.⁶⁹ Finally, the earl of Huntingdon received permission to take a personal confessor on his trip to Hungary in 1394 and probably traveled on this trip together with Burgundian and French ambassadors.

Before we place too much emphasis on the chivalric and pious elements of the characters of these men, we should remember that many of the members of the Order were also seasoned soldiers, who were implicated at times in acts of extreme violence. A telling example is

⁶⁶ *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381–1394*, ed. and trans. L. C. Hector and B. F. Harvey (Oxford, 1982), 475–77.

⁶⁷ Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 314, citing *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1409–13*, 2–3. The wording of the entry in the actual Close Rolls leaves it open to question whether Fitzhugh was travelling himself, or just sending arms (TNA C 54/257, m.1, /259, ms. 38–9). Thanks to Anne Curry and Tony Moore for advice on this source.

⁶⁸ Walker, “Sir Richard Abberbury and his Kinsmen,” 131–32.

⁶⁹ Jonathan Sumption, *Divided Houses: Hundred Years War III* (London, 2009), 666, citing J. Froissart, *Oeuvres*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, 25 vols. (Brussels, 1867–77), 13: 352–54.

the episode of the questioning of a Carmelite friar in 1384, who had accused John of Gaunt of plotting to murder Richard II. The victim was tortured by a group including the earl of Huntingdon, Sir William Elmham and Sir Henry Green, all members of the order of the Passion. The monk of Westminster provides a graphic description:

They now took him down and forced his feet and the whole length of his shins up to the knees to rest for some time on the fire, while Sir William Elmham sat so heavily astride his loins that he was deprived of all power to draw his feet back from the flames; with the result that through the scorching and burning of the fire a number of heat-cracks were plainly visible on his feet and shins until the day of his burial.⁷⁰

Diplomatic service was another important part of the activities undertaken by members of the Order between the years 1386–1399. For instance, fourteen of the members were involved in some kind of negotiation activity during this period. As an example, the Bishop of St David's was involved in Aragon (with Elmham) in 1395 and Paris (with the earl Marshal and earl of Rutland) in 1395.⁷¹ Abberbury was involved on four diplomatic missions: 1386 in Portugal, 1393–4 in Leulingham, 1394–95 in Bavaria and 1398 to the Eastern Mediterranean.⁷² The diplomatic meetings between England and France in the early years of the 1390s, starting with talks on peace and then moving onto the marriage discussions were all heavily manned by members of the Order. The talks in 1393–1394 were the closest the English and French came to a lasting peace (perhaps thwarted by the madness of Charles and the reluctance for the English king to owe homage for Gascony) and these involved six members of the order. Could it have been at these meetings that membership was discussed? Or were these men involved in the negotiations precisely because they were members?

Next, what kind of military service did the members of the order demonstrate throughout their careers?⁷³ Were the members on this list

⁷⁰ *Westminster Chronicle*, 75.

⁷¹ For Aragonese negotiations see, Palmer, "The Background to Richard II's Marriage to Isabel of France (1396)." The bishop never made it to Aragon, returning to England from Paris. For Paris negotiations see Rymer, *Foedera*, 7: 802.

⁷² Walker, "Sir Richard Abberbury and his Kinsmen," 129.

⁷³ The following evidence is taken from the online database: www.medievalsoldier.org and supplemented with other evidence collected during the course of the research project. The database was compiled by utilising the extensive records of the Exchequer, which include muster rolls for paid forces, to account for actual service. The database also hosts the evidence provided when soldiers indicated they were intending

included as a recruitment tool because they could produce a realistic military force? A good place to start is with the military service of Sir John Harleston, who is of course mentioned by name in Mézières' letter to Richard II. He began his career with garrison service (*vide* his exploits discussed earlier); then joined Thomas of Woodstock, earl of Buckingham and later duke of Gloucester's campaign through France in 1380 before serving with Bishop Despencer in 1383 on the crusade to Flanders; then to Portugal where he perhaps fought at the battle of Aljubarota. He even found time to crush the Peasants' Revolt in Essex with the duke of Gloucester in 1381. In terms of the size of retinues that he had previously led or had access to, he led a sizable force of 150 men on the expedition in 1380, with 70 men-at-arms, including 7 knights and 80 archers.⁷⁴ He was therefore a very credible recruit to such an order, and would have been able to realistically promise to bring along other capable knights and soldiers.

John Holland, the earl of Huntingdon, receiver of the *sustance* and also mentioned in the *Epistre*, had a similarly martial career. He served in a wide variety of theatres, including the Great Chevauchée in 1373 with John of Gaunt; in Castile, again with Gaunt; on naval campaigns and as Admiral, Captain of Calais, and on campaigns in Scotland and Ireland. He also led large forces on some of these expeditions, peaking with a retinue of 641 soldiers in 1399. Huntingdon, half-brother of Richard II, was created earl in 1389 and was Chief Chamberlain of the Household from 1390–1399. As we have seen previously, he was involved in violent episodes and in 1385 on the Scottish campaign he murdered Ralph Stafford, heir to the earl of Stafford. Despite this long and well-evidenced military career, Huntingdon's own deposition in the Scrope versus Grosvenor case before the Court of Chivalry "contained nothing of the slightest interest," according to Harris-Nicholas. This stormy career came to an inglorious end when he was executed, or more correctly lynched, by a mob, in 1400, for his involvement in the Epiphany Plot to kill Henry IV.⁷⁵

to serve by taking a protection against prosecution or appointed attorneys to look after their affairs whilst away on campaign.

⁷⁴ TNA E 403/478, ms. 22, 27.

⁷⁵ *The Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy*, ed. N. Harris Nicolas, 2 vols. (London, 1832), 2: 56; M. M. N. Stansfield, "Holland, John, first earl of Huntingdon and duke of Exeter (c.1352–1400)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, September 2004; online edition, January 2008) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13529>, accessed 18 May 2009].

Table 5 attempts to summarize the military service of the members of the Order of the Passion.⁷⁶ The first thing to note is the sheer extent of the service engaged in by the members of the Order. On average, each member served on ten campaigns in a variety of theatres, in garrisons, on expeditions and at sea, and their average length of service was around 32 years. Members of the Order first served militarily from the age of 12 and 13 (the earl of Rutland, aged just eight when accompanying his father on campaign to Portugal);⁷⁷ and, on the whole, continued until their 50s. The same data also allows us to test whether Mézières plans were realistic in terms of numbers. He planned to recruit around 21,000 soldiers for the Order's proposed crusade. Looking at the largest forces that the English members had led, accounts for just over 5,000 soldiers from just 23 members.⁷⁸ If Mézières intended each of the members of his Order to bring soldiers with them, depending on their status, then perhaps his plans were not so far fetched.

We can also study the military service from a micro-level and look beyond the service demonstrated in Table 5. The military contribution of these soldiers spans the years 1351–1427. This evidence can further aid us by showing that many of the members have served together on a number of occasions. In Ireland in 1394 we find 12 members serving together and 11 of the members in 1385 (unfortunately in 1385 we only know the names of the leaders of retinues rather than full muster lists). These were both royal expeditions, and as such may have been unusual and expected larger numbers of participants, but other expeditions also had large turnouts too.

As a further example, Sir William Faringdon was one of four members of the Order to campaign with Bishop Despencer in 1383, along with Hugh Despencer, Sir William Elmham and even the Bishop of St David's. Afterwards, Elmham and Faringdon both got into trouble with Parliament when they were accused of surrendering up occupied towns in return for cash bribes from the French. They apparently managed to secure around 3,000 francs each. In their defense they

⁷⁶ Thanks to David Simpkin for help with this table and following reference.

⁷⁷ P. E. Russell, *The English Intervention in Spain and Portugal in the time of Edward III and Richard II* (Oxford, 1955), 311, 313, 319, 337.

⁷⁸ These figures present the largest force led before 1399 and thus contemporary with the list. A number of these men would lead larger contingents in their future military commands.

Table 5: Military careers

Member	First service	Last service	Age at first	Age at last
duke of York	1359	1399	18	58
earl of Rutland	1381	1415	8	42
earl marshal	1385	1397	19	50
earl of Northumberland	1359	1407	18	66
Bishop of St Davids	1383			
Lord Despencer	1385	1399	12	26
Hugh Despencer	1373	1400	18	45
Clifford	1351	1385	15	39
West	1369	1388		
Elmham	1371	1399		
Harlestone	1370	1390		
Faringdon	1374	1412		
Ralph Percy	1388	1395		
Fitz Hugh	1384	1422	21	59
Felbrigg	1386	1416		
Abberbury	1370	1400	15	45
Green	1370	1399	23	52
Erpingham	1368	1416	13	61
Ralph Rochfort	1373	1417		
Morley	1388	1417	25	54
Peyto	1381	1388		
Chelmswick	1380	1394		
duke of Gloucester	1373	1395	18	40
duke of Lancaster	1350	1394	10	54
earl of Huntingdon	1371	1399	20	48
Average			17	49

Length	Exped	Naval	Garrison	Total	Realistic force?
40	7	2	1	10	600 [200 maa : 400 arch]
34	10	1	8	19	278 [78 maa : 200 arch]
31	3	2	3	8	240 [80 maa : 160 arch]
48	13	2	10	25	
14	4	1		5	175 [25 maa : 150 arch]
27	8	3	3	14	16 [4 maa (1 K) : 12 arch]
24	6	2	1	9	
	5	3	4	12	26 [13 maa (3 K) : 13 arch]
	8	3	1	12	10 [4 maa (1K) : 6 arch]
	3		4	7	
	3	2	8	13	
	2		1	3	
38	9	1	1	11	100 [20 maa : 80 arch]
	7			7	18 [6 maa (1 K) : 12 arch]
30	8		1	9	18 [6 maa (1 K) : 12 archers]
29	7	1		8	
48	7	1	2	10	
	4			4	
29	3	1	1	5	6 [2 maa (1 K) : 4 arch]
	2	1		3	
	2			2	4 [1 maa : 3 arch]
22	8	2	1	11	400 [100 maa : 300 arch]
44	13	4	2	19	3000 [1000 maa : 2000 archers]
28	8	4	5	17	260 [100 maa : 160 arch]
32	6	2	3	10	

claimed that it was better they had the money than leave it with the enemy, but this was not a winning argument and to survive they had to throw themselves on Richard II's mercy:

It has been decided in parliament that, you messires William Elmham, Thomas Trivet, Henry Ferrers, William Faringdon and Robert FitzRalph shall compensate and fully reimburse our lord the king with whatsoever you and each one of you have thus received and taken from the aforesaid enemy. In addition, that you all, the said Sir William Elmham, Thomas, Henry and Robert, shall be sent to prison and ransomed thence at the king's will for your misdeeds; taking into consideration the nature and extent of the offence committed by each of you: and you, Sir William Faringdon, because you have expressly acknowledged before the king himself receipt of various sums of gold from the said enemy, and presenting them with horses, to their great reinforcement, for which you did not have the king's permission or that of his lieutenant, you shall be at the king's mercy, in your body and possessions, for him to do with you as he pleases.⁷⁹

Nine men served on the campaigns in 1387–1388 led by the earl of Arundel, in the middle of the period of Appellant supremacy. As mentioned earlier, this might perhaps have been seen as an act of disloyalty to the king, although it did not preclude them becoming members of the Order of the Passion. The picture of military service provided by Table 5 therefore demonstrates that not only were this group highly experienced, but that they served together in large numbers on various campaigns, thus demonstrating that the membership list conceals networks of horizontal links between the members. It may well be that we would get this pattern with a random number of soldiers, but based on our experience of working with the medieval soldier database, this seems unlikely. This type of analysis has only been possible because of the soldier database and shows how closely interweaved the careers of these soldiers are. It also suggests that these horizontal links should perhaps be seen as being just as important in explaining the membership of this Order as the vertical links to the king and other powerful nobles.

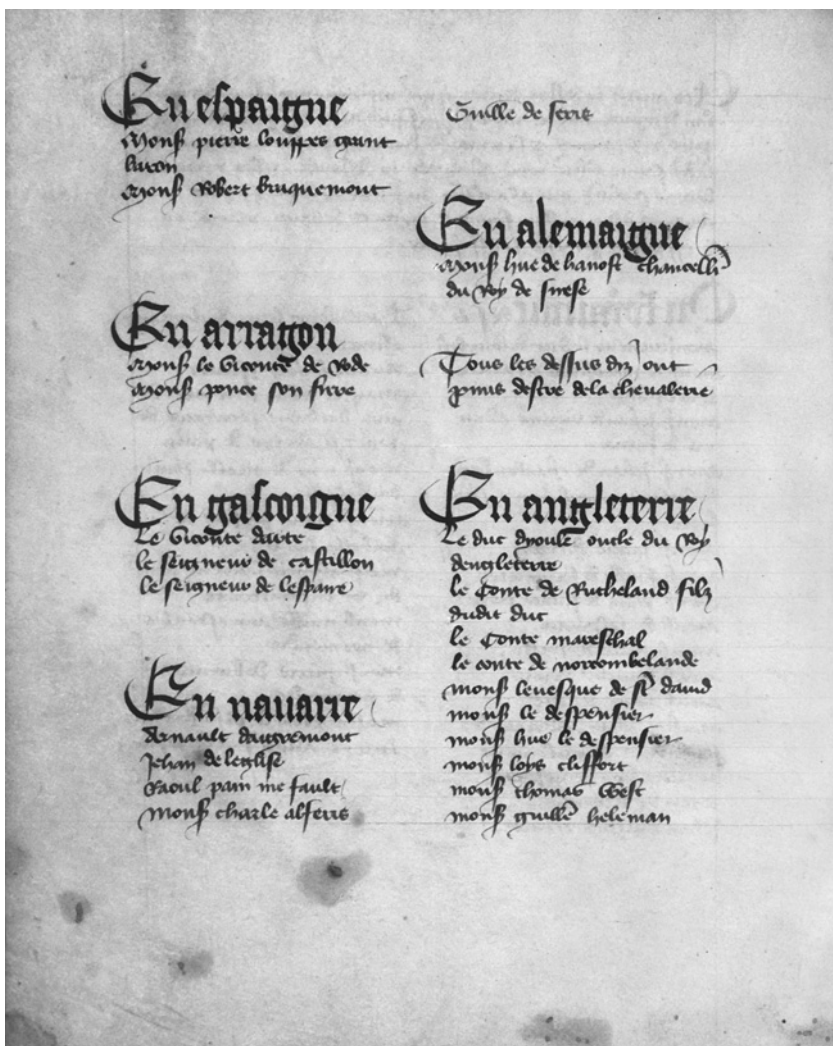
The military service of the members of the Order continued after 1399, with seven serving in the first expedition to Scotland in 1400 led by Henry IV; and five continuing to serve down to Agincourt. This pattern of service therefore demonstrates that a number of the

⁷⁹ *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. C. Given-Wilson et al. (CD-ROM, Scholarly Digital Editions, Leicester: 2005), Richard II, October 1383, iii–158.

members continued unscathed across the divide between regimes and warns us about placing too much emphasis on particular connections as it is clear that each individual was a member of a number of sometimes conflicting networks.

The existence of a web of networks, as demonstrated above, means that it is hard to make any particular conclusion about links or loyalties of men who had promised to join or support the Order of the Passion. Rather, each of the members would seem to have been well qualified for the Order. No one stands out as an unusual member. There is enough evidence of interest or participation in crusade or pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The clearest theme is that all the members were militarily active, and some had extensive careers. This pattern of military service appears just like any member of what we might call the English medieval military community, which in parts can look like the service of a professional soldiery. Also, there is a similar pattern in terms of networks of relationships and service between these men. In particular, men could serve a number of lords and were mostly able to survive the change in regime unscathed. Perhaps a more important question to be asked is not who was a member of the Order but why were certain English nobles, who shared similar profiles, excluded? These men included Henry, earl of Derby, Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester, William Scrope, earl of Wiltshire, John Beaufort, marquis of Dorset and Somerset, and Edward Courtney, earl of Devon.

In conclusion, the key defining qualities of the members of the Order of the Passion were their membership of the Order of the Garter; their involvement in the crusade to Prussia and visits to the Holy Land; their diplomatic service; and their extensive military careers. These themes stand out, and this perhaps indicates that these individuals were listed by de Mézières because this was the sort of thing that they would do. Were they also interested in peace with France? As we have seen, a number of members served in the Hundred Years War to Agincourt and beyond. But there are exceptions to this, men such as Sir Richard Abberbury, who appears to have lived from 1400 continually overseas and who chose to continue to pursue his personal interest in the crusade and pilgrimage. As we have noted, it is hard to say whether the list is a record of pledges, or a wish list of likely recruits. We can say, based on their shared experiences, that the listed members would have been very credible recruits to such an Order. Finally, looking for a clear reason for membership, it was perhaps their participation in diplomatic exchanges with France in the early 1390s that led to many of these men being noticed for recruitment into Mézières' Order of the Passion.



Part of the list of those promising to become a member of the Order of the Passion. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS 2251, fol. 113.

AFFINITIES & CONTRASTS:
MÉZIÈRES, HIS FELLOW-TRAVELERS,
AND HIS “OTHERS”

MACHAUT, MÉZIÈRES, MAKHAIRAS AND AMADI:
CONSTRUCTING THE REIGN OF PETER I (1359–1369)

Peter Edbury

How we construct the past depends partly on our own assumptions and cultural baggage and partly on the extent to which we allow ourselves to be influenced by earlier constructions, which in their turn were the product of very different sets of assumptions and perceptions. In examining the reign of King Peter I of Cyprus (1359–1369), historians have to confront the problems inherent in using the surviving medieval narratives. The dramatic events surrounding his rule are in themselves sufficient to explain why contemporaries and near contemporaries in the fourteenth century, as well as modern historians, gave him the highest literary profile of any of the Lusignan kings: the capture of Alexandria in 1365 and the story of his murder at the beginning of 1369, together with his visits to the Europe, which brought him and his kingdom to the attention of people in the West, ensured a lasting interest. The accounts by Philippe de Mézières, Guillaume de Machaut, Leontios Makhairas and the anonymous author of the work known as the *Chronique d'Amadi* stand out as the most important descriptions of Peter's reign.¹ But they are not the only ones: mention might for example be made here of Jean Froissart who wrote about Peter's first visit to the West (1362–5), or those historians who wrote in Arabic in the Mamluk sultanate, and who from their own different perspective put on record the sack of Alexandria and the subsequent war with the Mamluk sultanate.² These four writers, however, provide more than enough material for the present discussion.

¹ Philippe de Mézières, *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas*, ed. Joachim Smet (Rome, 1954); Guillaume de Machaut, *La Prise D'Alixandre (The Taking of Alexandria)*, ed. and trans. R. Barton Palmer (New York, 2002); Leontios Makhairas, *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus entitled "Chronicle,"* ed. Richard M. Dawkins (Oxford, 1932); "Chronique d'Amadi," in *Chroniques d'Amadi et de Strambaldi*, ed. René de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1891–1893), 1.

² Jean Froissart, *Chroniques: Livre 1: Le manuscrit d'Amiens*, ed. George T. Diller, vol. 3 (Geneva, 1992), 279–88, 296, 318. For Arabic-language accounts, *Chypre dans les sources arabes médiévales*, ed. and trans M. Tahar Mansouri (Nicosia, 2001), 62–75, 75–80, 99–100, 102, 110–11, 115–20.

Philippe de Mézières' *Vita* of Pierre de Thomas has the great virtue of contemporaneity. Pierre, a Carmelite friar and titular patriarch of Constantinople, had been the papal legate appointed to accompany the Alexandria crusade; he died on Cyprus on 6 January 1366, and the *Vita* was composed later that same year. But although it was not influenced by subsequent events such as the murder of King Peter, it is important to remember that it was written with the deliberate intention of persuading people—not least the pope—of Pierre de Thomas's merits with a view to his canonisation. Pierre therefore occupies the foreground, while the king plays a secondary role. Philippe de Mézières's other works in which he mentions King Peter and Cyprus date from later in his life, long after he had left Cyprus, and are all, in their different ways, designed to promote the crusade and Philippe's own brain-child, the Order of the Passion. Consideration of the potential of Cyprus, the nearest Christian outpost to the Holy Land but now ravaged by the Genoese, and the memory of Peter, the last Christian king—indeed the only Christian king in living memory—to have led a crusade in the eastern Mediterranean, is of necessity subordinated to this agenda.³

Guillaume de Machaut's *Capture of Alexandria*, a rhymed biography of King Peter, was written within two or three years of Peter's death. It is the final major work by a man who is regarded as one of the most accomplished French poets of the fourteenth century, and it is sometimes compared to the other rhymed biographies from this period, the Chandos Herald's *Life of the Black Prince* and Jean Cuvelier's *Song of Bertrand du Guesclin*.⁴ The *Capture of Alexandria* is an important work for a number of reasons. Guillaume was writing close to the events, and so his view was not influenced by the Genoese invasion of Cyprus in 1373–1374; his information was supplied by returned French crusaders who had participated the Alexandria campaign and the various military actions that occupied Peter between 1366 and his second visit to the West towards the end of 1368, and so his work reflects their perceptions and preoccupations. Indeed, it is noticeable that he gives a disproportionate amount of attention to the events of

³ In particular, Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, ed. G. W. Coopland (Cambridge, 1969), 1: 259, 295–99; 2: 419.

⁴ Herald of Sir John Chandos, *La Vie du Prince Noir*, ed. Mildred K. Pope and Eleanor C. Lodge (Oxford, 1910); Jean Cuvelier, *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ed. Jean-Claude Faucon (Toulouse, 1990).

1367, and so it would seem that he relied to an appreciable extent on informants who formed part of the second wave of western crusaders who had been drawn to the East once news of the sensational events of 1365 had reached the West.

More problematic are the Cypriot writers. Pride of place belongs to the fifteenth-century Leontios Makhairas, whose work was later translated from Greek into Italian by Diomedes Strambali.⁵ Two sixteenth-century Italian narratives, the so-called *Chronique d'Amadi* and Florio Bustron's *Historia overo commentarii de Cipro*,⁶ are clearly related to Leontios's account of Peter's reign and the subsequent events, with the same narrative structure and much of the same information. The precise relationship between these texts has still not been investigated systematically. My own view is that Florio Bustron adapted the information he found in *Amadi*, and so for his account of Peter's reign he is essentially derivative; alternatively it is possible that both authors used a now-lost common original. Bustron's work is a far more elegant and accomplished piece of literature, whereas *Amadi*, both in terms of style and content, is much cruder. But it is precisely because it lacks Bustron's polish and appears to reproduce more faithfully the older French narratives that can be shown to lie behind its account of thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century events that *Amadi* appeals to the historian.

The precise relationship between Leontios Makhairas and *Amadi* is more difficult, a matter for hypothesis rather than securely demonstrable evaluation. *Amadi* provides just enough information in the accounts of Peter's reign and the Genoese War of 1373–74 that is absent from Leontios's version of events to make a strong case that it cannot be seen simply as an epitome of Leontios, or, if it is, the version of Leontios's text that the *Amadi* author used must have differed significantly from that to be found in any of the three extant manuscripts. The question of the relationship between these two texts prompts the further question of how Leontios set about constructing his *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus*. What little we know of Leontios's career shows that he was active in royal service

⁵ Diomedes Strambali (Strambaldi), "Chronicha del Regno di Cypro," in *Chroniques d'Amadi et de Strambaldi*, ed. René de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1891–1893), 2.

⁶ Florio Bustron, *Historia overo commentarii de Cipro*, ed. René de Mas Latrie as "Chronique de l'île de Chypre," *Collection des documents inédits de l'histoire de France: Mélanges historiques*, 5 (1886).

between the first decade of the fifteenth century and the 1430s. The date of his birth is not known, but it is most unlikely to have been before 1360 and was probably nearer 1380. It is immediately noticeable that Leontios's most extensive and detailed narration covers the period 1359–1374, in other words the time before he was born or the years of his early childhood, whereas the period of his own service in government, the first three decades of the fifteenth century, are for the most part dealt with in a far more cursory fashion. It has therefore to be asked whether and to what extent he was the original author of the text for the years 1359–1374. Did he start from scratch, or did he embellish a pre-existing account, expanding the narrative by making use of documents and oral traditions?⁷ In a paper published in 1996 James Howard-Johnston asked a similar question about the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene: why is she so well informed about the years before she was born and those coinciding with her childhood, and why are the closing years of Alexios's reign, when she herself had reached years of maturity, handled so much less satisfactorily? Howard-Johnston's answer—one that unsurprisingly proved controversial—was that Anna did little more than edit a pre-existing narrative, in this case drafted by her own husband.⁸ I would suggest that the same could well be true of Leontios Makhairas for the reign of Peter I and the Genoese War: he adapted an already existing account. But would it have been written in French or Greek, and is it possible that the *Amadi* author derived his information from it rather than from a now lost redaction of Leontios's *Recital*?

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So how did these authors construct the past? A simple instance is presented by the question of whether Peter's two younger brothers, John and James, were guilty of his murder. Mézières and Machaut were in no doubt that they were;⁹ Leontios and other Cypriot writers, while

⁷ For Leontios's career and his use of documents, see Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, "Diplomatics and Historiography: the Use of Documents in the *Chronicle* of Leontios Makhairas," in *Diplomatics in the Eastern Mediterranean 1000–1500: Aspects of Cross-Cultural Communications*, eds. Alexander D. Beihammer, Maria G. Parani, and Christopher D. Schabel (Leiden, 2008), 293–323.

⁸ James Howard-Johnston, "Anna Komnene and the *Alexiad*," in *Alexios I Komnenos, I, Papers*, eds. Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe (Belfast, 1996), 232–59.

⁹ Guillaume de Machaut, *La Prise D'Alixandre*, 401–11; Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 1: 259. For other references, see Nicolas Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières* (Paris, 1896), 394 n. 5.

admitting they were present at the event, distanced them from the actual crime.¹⁰ So who are we to believe? Mézières and Machaut and a number of other western writers, none of whom were in Cyprus at the time, were clearly repeating a widely held view. Arguably Leontios, with his detailed, circumstantial account, was drawing on eyewitness testimony. But against that, it can be pointed out on the basis of Leontios' narrative that the regent who took office following the murder was Peter's brother John, the titular prince of Antioch, and he made no attempt to punish the actual murderers: quite the contrary they remained high in his counsels, and Peter's widow clearly held John responsible. Add to that the near certainty that the narrative reached its present form during the reign of Peter's other brother, James I (1382–98) or, more likely, James's son Janus (1398–1432), and it would seem on balance more likely that Leontios, rather than accuse the king or his father of regicide, was engaging in a cover-up, and that the view commonly held in the West was correct.¹¹

More complex is the question of Peter's accession and his attitude to the crusade. Peter's rule was disputed by a nephew named Hugh, the son of his deceased elder brother. There is no evidence that might suggest that there were people on Cyprus who wanted Hugh as their king, and, in any case, by the long-established inheritance customs of the Latin East, Peter was undoubtedly the legitimate monarch. But in Europe a different view prevailed. Hugh, who was living in the West, had support at the royal courts of Paris and Naples, and that in turn gave him the ear of the pope. What was more, contemporaries would have been aware that Cypriot inheritance law was at odds with practices in some places in the West. Thus, when in 1377 an identical situation arose in England, the outcome ran directly counter to what had happened on Cyprus: King Edward III died; his eldest son, Edward the Black Prince, had predeceased him, but there the accepted heir was the Black Prince's child, Richard II, and not the old king's eldest surviving son, John of Gaunt. I have argued elsewhere that after his accession Peter recognized the need to reach a settlement with his nephew in which his claim to the throne would be bought off. Accordingly he travelled to the papal court at Avignon, arriving in March 1363,

¹⁰ Leontios Makhairas, 1: §§261–81; Diomedes Strambali, "Chronicha," 102–14; "Chronique d'Amadi," 422–26; Florio Bustron, "Chronique," 272–76.

¹¹ Peter W. Edbury, "The Murder of King Peter I of Cyprus (1359–1369)," *Journal of Medieval History* 9 (1980), 219–33, at 224–25.

where the settlement was finalized and he and his nephew were formally reconciled. In the course of these negotiations Peter was drawn into the crusade plans initiated by Pope Urban V and King John II of France, and, so I would argue, his initial willingness to involve himself in them was in part at least a lever to win support for the legitimacy of his kingship. Just as in the twelfth century Saladin, a man who had usurped power in both Egypt and Syria, used the promotion of Islamic holy war, *jihad*, to gain legitimization for his rule, so too Peter used his espousal of Christian Holy War, the crusade, as a means of gaining papal and popular support in the West.¹² Then, when in 1364 King John of France died, Peter, who was still in the West at the time, took sole charge of the planned expedition, and with it he inherited the crusading rhetoric of the French royal court that placed the recovery of Jerusalem and the Holy Land as its primary goal—a crusading rhetoric that stretched back to the time of St Louis and beyond, and which had been reiterated by all the kings of France until the outbreak of the Hundred Years War in the 1330s. In the early 1360s King John had revived these crusading aspirations now that England and France had agreed the truce of Brétigny. But, far from being besotted with the idea of recovering Jerusalem, when it came to attempts to negotiate peace with the Mamluk sultanate in the years following the Alexandria campaign, Peter placed commercial considerations rather than ownership of the Holy Land at the top of his agenda.¹³

So how do our narrators appear in the light of these ideas? Guillaume de Machaut is poorly informed about the early years of the reign. That in itself is unsurprising as the westerners who supplied him with information would have only begun arriving in the East with the 1365 Alexandria expedition. The *Capture of Alexandria* gives no hint that Peter's accession was contested and leaves no doubt that Peter's overwhelming passion was for the crusade and the recovery of Jerusalem. It is Machaut who preserved the story of Peter's creation of a chivalric order to promote crusading, the Order of the Sword. The Order was set up, so we are told, to attract "knights of quality, men who felt

¹² This is a central thesis in Malcolm Cameron Lyons and David E. P. Jackson, *Saladin: the Politics of the Holy War* (Cambridge, 1982).

¹³ Peter W. Edbury, "The Crusading Policy of King Peter I of Cyprus" in *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands I the Period of the Crusades*, ed. Peter M. Holt (Warminster, 1977), 90–105; idem, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), 147–72, *passim*.

devotion to the Promised Land,” and it was created secretly before the death of Peter’s father, Hugh IV.¹⁴ These details invite scepticism: the whole point of having a chivalric order was that it entailed public display, and so the idea of a secret order is a nonsense. Moreover, an order entitled “The Order of the Sword” with a motto of *Pour loiauté maintenir* does not sound as if it had particular crusading resonances. No doubt Peter did flatter the westerners who served with him by enrolling them as members, but I suspect that he may have tried to enhance the sense of honour that he was bestowing on them by pretending his order was older than it really was. The Order of the Sword was of necessity bound up with the razzmatazz of medieval chivalric display, and it would have been natural for the French veterans of Peter’s wars who had been awarded membership to have promoted the view of Peter’s singleness of purpose in leading the crusade in which they had participated. It was these French veterans who had fought in Peter’s wars between 1365 and 1368 who had provided Machaut with his information, and it was their peers, friends and relatives who would comprise his target audience. The *Capture of Alexandria* can be read as a verse biography of a heroic king who met an untimely death, but it was also a vehicle for praising those named individuals who served him on his expeditions: Peter’s campaigns gave these men the occasion to fight and thereby gain renown. Much has been written about how participation in the crusades offered the warrior class the opportunity to attain salvation, but crusading also provided a means for acquiring honour and displaying chivalric prowess, and it is as a celebration of knightly honour that Guillaume de Machaut’s last great work should be read.

Philippe de Mézières was heavily committed to the idea that Peter was keen to promote the crusade and win Jerusalem, which was after all his rightful inheritance. But he too made no mention of the problems at the start of the reign. Indeed, in the *Vita* of Pierre de Thomas, Philippe goes out of his way to tell us—twice—that Peter’s accession was legitimate. He says nothing about his coronation as king of Cyprus, but he does describe how Peter, who had heard of Pierre de Thomas’s fame, sent word to him at Rhodes to come to Cyprus to crown him as king of Jerusalem. The ceremony took place in Famagusta cathedral on Easter Sunday 1360. Philippe’s account is of a pious king honouring

¹⁴ Guillaume de Machaut, *La Prise D’Alixandre*, 55.

the saintly papal legate by calling on him to perform this special task. We may suspect, however, that it was the king who gained more from this event. Peter knew he would have to satisfy the pope of the rightfulness of his accession, and getting the pope's own legate to crown him must have been a major boost to his cause. Irrespective of whether Pierre de Thomas was aware of the situation, Peter, by using the legate on this occasion, was in effect pre-empting the ruling of the *Curia*.¹⁵ Moving on, Philippe describes how in 1361 Peter, who from youth had desired "the destruction of the enemies of the faith," achieved the conquest of Antalya (*Satalia*). The victory gave Pierre de Thomas the chance to exercise his legatine functions in consecrating churches and appointed clergy. It was a significant achievement, but we might be pardoned for wondering whether the chief motivation was really to strike a blow against the forces of Islam or whether it was more a question of securing a port which was a useful way-station between Rhodes and Cyprus and one, moreover, that had been used as a base for pirates operating in the approaches to Cyprus. So, inspired by this success, Peter, "who from his youth had desired the liberation of his paternal inheritance, the kingdom of Jerusalem" set off for the West, guided by Pierre de Thomas, to recruit men for his forthcoming assault on the Holy Land.¹⁶

Leontios Makhairas, however, is quite different. The first clue that there was a problem is provided by the report that King Hugh IV had arranged for Peter to be crowned king of Cyprus in his own lifetime—a report also to be found in *Amadi*.¹⁷ Such a move was unprecedented in Cyprus, and the only coronation in the kingdom of Jerusalem to have taken place while the previous king was still alive had occurred as far back as 1183.¹⁸ Presumably, this coronation was a pre-emptive move intended to head off Hugh's anticipated challenge and illustrates the seriousness with which it was viewed. Leontios then tells how, shortly after the death of his father, Peter was crowned king of Cyprus in Nicosia by Guy of Ibelin, bishop of Limassol.¹⁹ It would appear that the archbishop of Nicosia was then living in the West,

¹⁵ Philippe de Mézières, *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas*, 89–92.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 96–97, 102.

¹⁷ Leontios Makhairas, §86; "Chronique d'Amadi," 408.

¹⁸ For 1183, see Bernard Hamilton, *The Leper King and his Heirs* (Cambridge, 2000), 194–95.

¹⁹ Leontios Makhairas, §90.

perhaps another reason why Peter may have wanted a churchman of the seniority of Pierre de Thomas to crown him king of Jerusalem.²⁰ Leontios then moves on to a hostile account of Pierre de Thomas's mishandling of the Greeks and then Peter's coronation by the legate as king of Jerusalem before recounting the king's nephew, Hugh of Lusignan's, claim to the throne at the papal curia.²¹ According to Leontios, Hugh's claim was settled with an appropriate pay-off, but then the king of France pressed the pope to reopen the affair, and it was at this point that Peter decided that he would have to go to Avignon in person.²² So there is no mention of crusading: instead we learn of a hearing before the pope in which Peter and his nephew each put their case. It is only after the two men were reconciled that one of the three extant manuscripts of Leontios's *Recital* adds that King Peter "begged the rulers of the West to send a force to go against the men of false belief to win back the kingdom of Jerusalem."²³

Historians of course do not have to rely solely on the medieval narrative constructs; papal letters and other documents survive which shed light on the circumstances and which can act as correctives to the narratives. Machaut was celebrating the exploits of a crusader king and in a delightfully over-the-top prologue described the gods of pagan antiquity endowing him with the talents to enable him become the equal of the Nine Worthies. But behind this narrative is the desire to celebrate the exploits of the French crusaders who, thanks to Peter's leadership, were able to win renown as crusaders for themselves, and that purpose would have been ill served by suggesting that Peter's commitment to crusading was anything other than straightforward. Mézières similarly had to present a simplified image: the king had provided the stage on which the legate could exhibit the characteristics that merited canonisation, and to suggest that Peter may have had ulterior motives would have detracted from the main thrust of his message. In his other, much later works, Peter's commitment to crusading was held up as an example to contemporary kings, and his murder and the Genoese ravaging of Cyprus were decried as obstacles to progress; certainly there was no room for the idea that the king was killed because he was mentally

²⁰ George Hill, *A History of Cyprus* (Cambridge, 1940–52), 3: 1079.

²¹ Leontios Makhairas, §§101–2, 104–8; cf. "Amadi," 409–10.

²² Leontios Makhairas, §§108, 129; "Amadi," 412.

²³ Leontios Makhairas, §131. Amadi has no mention of recovering Jerusalem at this point.

unstable and posed a threat to those around him or that the Genoese invasion of Cyprus came about as the justifiable reprisals for a long sequence of provocative actions on the part of the Cypriots, of which damaging Genoese commercial interests in Egypt in the course of war initiated in 1365 was just one. Leontios and *Amadi* on the other hand had no need to promote the crusade as the focus of their interpretation and could see Peter's reign in terms of a series of military events, many of which had a splendour of their own but which in the end meant that Cyprus was saddled with an unwinnable war that placed an unsustainable burden on its resources.

My own understanding of Peter's reign shows that I have allowed the Cypriot perspectives as preserved by Leontios Makhairas and the author of the *Chronique d'Amadi* to influence me more than the other versions. In their different ways, Guillaume de Machaut and Philippe de Mézières were publicists, with a clear propagandist intent that has to be seen for what it was. Leontios Makhairas exhibited an uncompromising loyalty to the Lusignan regime but, at the same time, he was able to offset that loyalty by a sense of his wider Greek identity as a member of the Byzantine *oecumene*. One consequence was his total lack of commitment to a western crusading ideology, and that freed him from the need to remain silent about Peter's disputed accession.²⁴

²⁴ Nicolaou-Konnari, "Diplomatics and Historiography," 293; eadem, "A poor island and an orphaned realm..., built upon a rock in the midst of the sea ..., surrounded by the infidel Turks and Saracens": The Crusade Ideology in Leontios Makhairas's Greek *Chronicle of Cyprus*," *Crusades* 10 (2011), forthcoming.

APOLOGISTS OR CRITICS?
THE REIGN OF PETER I OF LUSIGNAN (1359–1369)
VIEWED BY PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES (1327–1405)
AND LEONTIOS MAKHAIRAS (CA. 1360/80–AFTER 1432)

Angel Nicolaou-Konnari*

I argued some time ago, discussing the crusader ideology in Leontios Makhairas' Greek chronicle of Cyprus at a conference on Holy War, most appropriately held in Jerusalem, that Philippe de Mézières portrays King Peter I of Lusignan (1329–1369) as the ideal crusader and defender of the Church, the epic hero as opposed to Makhairas' more realistic picture. I also suggested that a close comparison of how the two writers view the Cypriot king's reign would enhance our understanding of the social logic of their work.¹ I am glad that a conference on Mézières, most appropriately held in Nicosia, gives me the opportunity to further explore these issues. This paper is, thus, intended to compare the way Peter and the events surrounding his reign are perceived and presented in the writings of Mézières and Makhairas in order to show the difference of perspective between a fourteenth-century non-Cypriot exponent of the crusader ideal and a fifteenth-century Greek Cypriot historiographer. It will focus on the relation between the way the picture of Peter's reign is constructed by the two writers and their ideological and authorial intentions. The examination of the interdependence between ideological bias and historical reliability will be attempted only occasionally since such an approach

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¹ Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, "The Crusader Ideology in the Greek Cypriot *Chronicle* of Leontios Makhairas: Holy War or National War?" paper presented at the joint research conference of the Institute for Advanced Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Science Foundation, *Holy War: Past and Present. The Crusader Phenomenon and its Relevance Today*, organized by Sophia Menache, Judith Bronstein, and Adrian Boas (Jerusalem, 1–6 June 2008). A reworked version of the paper is to be published as "A poor island and an orphaned realm..., built upon a rock in the midst of the sea..., surrounded by the infidel Turks and Saracens: The Crusader Ideology in Leontios Makhairas' Greek *Chronicle* of Cyprus," *Crusades* 10 (2011) (forthcoming).

would demand an extensive comparison with other contemporary and later texts and goes beyond the scope of this paper.

MÉZIÈRES AND MAKHAIRAS: WORKS AND DAYS, IDEOLOGY AND HISTORY WRITING

The reconstruction of the lives and careers of Mézières and Makhairas mainly from the sparse information we glean from their writings as well as the study of their ideological identity as revealed in their work suggest that these were factors that had a great impact on the way they present Peter and his reign. Interestingly, their lives seem to go along common pathways. Philippe was a Frenchman by birth and a citizen of Christendom by conviction;² although he lived for some time in Cyprus, nothing suggests that he spoke Greek.³ Leontios was a Greek Cypriot partaking of the French culture;⁴ he is said to have spoken

² For Mézières' life with references to his published and unpublished works, see Abbé J. Lebeuf, "Mémoire sur la Vie de Philippe de Maizières, conseiller du roi Charles V, & Chancelier du royaume de Chypre," *Mémoires de littérature tirés des registres de l'Académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres* ser. 1, 17 (1751), 491–514; Nicolas Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405) et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896; repr. London, 1973); Olivier Caudron, "Philippe de Mézières," in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique* (Paris, 1984), 12/1, cols. 1309–16; Sylvie Lefèvre, "Philippe de Mézières," in *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: le Moyen Age*, ed. G. Hasenohr and Michel Zink (Paris, 1992), 1144–46; Philippe Contamine and Jacques Paviot's introduction to their edition of Philippe de Mézières, *Une épître lamentable et consolatoire. Adressée en 1397 à Philippe le Hardi, duc de Bourgogne, sur la défaite de Nicopolis (1396)*, with the collaboration of Céline Van Hoorebeeck (Paris, 2008), 11–45; Joël Blanchard's introduction to his Modern French translation of Philippe de Mézières, *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin* (Paris, 2008), 9–24, hereafter cited as *Songe* (Blanchard). Particularly for his career as a crusader and a propagandist, also see: Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London, 1934), passim, and esp. Appendices II–III; idem, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), chap. VII, passim; and Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*, vol. 1. *The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, 1976), chap. 11–12, passim.

³ I do not know on what evidence Richard H. Hoppin and Karl Kuegle, "Cyprus: medieval polyphony," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (with John Tyrrell), 29 vols. (London – New York, 2001²), 6: 805 found their claim that Philippe "had himself translated [a dramatized musical Office for the Presentation of the Virgin] from the Greek".

⁴ The best critical edition of his chronicle remains Leontios Makhairas, *Recital concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus entitled 'Chronicle'*, ed. and trans. R. M. Dawkins, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1932) (hereafter cited as Makhairas, *Chronicle*), which uses two of the extant manuscripts, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. VII, 16, 1080 (=V) and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Selden, supra 14 (=O). A parallel diplomatic edition of all three manuscript texts, V, O, and Ravenna, Biblioteca Classense, gr. 187

“assés bon françois”.⁵ Philippe was probably born in 1327 in Amiens in a family of the lesser nobility originating from the village of Mézières.⁶ He was the youngest of twelve children; some of his brothers followed the ecclesiastical career with great success, others served the king of France and the nobility. His eldest brother Guillaume de Mézières, a man of arms, followed him to Cyprus, recommended to Peter by Pope Urban V (1362–1370) in a letter dated 15 September 1365, and was present at the audition of the testimonies of the witnesses for the miracles performed by the deceased Peter Thomas (“Dominum Guilielmum de Maseriis, fratrem dicti domini cancellarii”) held in Famagusta on 14 April 1366;⁷ he may have been the relative referred to by Philippe in two of his works as “familia sua” present at the 1365 capture of Alexandria, although the phrase implies that more than one members

(=R), has recently been made available, see Leontios Makhairas, *Χρονικό της Κύπρου. Παράλληλη διπλωματική έκδοση των χειρογράφων* [*Chronicle of Cyprus. Parallel Diplomatic Edition of the Manuscripts*], ed. Michalis Pieris and Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, Cyprus Research Centre, Texts and Studies in the History of Cyprus 48 (Nicosia, 2003) (hereafter cited as Makhairas, *Diplomatic Edition*). References to Makhairas and his family are to be found in *ibid.*, 121–22, 324–25, 335, 348–49, 351–52, 393, 394, 398–99, 414, 423, 424, 425, 448, 456–57; see also below, note 5. For a full account of the available information, see Michalis Pieris and Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, “Λεοντίου Μαχαιρά, Εξήγησις της γλυκείας χώρας Κύπρου η ποία λέγεται κρόνικα τουτέστιν χρονικόν. Βιβλιογραφικός Οδηγός” [Leontios Makhairas, *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus Entitled ‘Chronicle’*. An Annotated Bibliography], *Επετηρίδα Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών (Κύπρου)* [Cyprus Research Centre Annual Review] 23 (1997), 83–85 and *eadem*, “Diplomatics and Historiography: The Use of Documents in the *Chronicle* of Leontios Makhairas,” in *Diplomatics in the Eastern Mediterranean 1000–1500: Aspects of Cross-Cultural Communication*, ed. Alexander D. Beihammer, Maria G. Parani, and Christopher D. Schabel, *The Medieval Mediterranean* 74 (Leiden – Boston, 2008), 294–96 and note 6.

⁵ Bertrandon de La Broquière, *Le Voyage d’Outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquière*, ed. Charles Schefer (Paris, 1892), 106, extract also in Louis de Mas Latrie, ed., *Histoire de l’île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan*, vols. 2–3 (Paris, 1852–1855; repr. Famagusta, 1970), 3: 3–4.

⁶ The editors of Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, Introduction, 14 propose an earlier date, around 1325/6.

⁷ For the pope’s letter of recommendation, see Archivio Segreto Vaticano, *Reg. Vat.* 247, fol. 149r (dated “XVII Kal. Oct.”, “anno tertio” of Urban’s pontificate); also see Jorga, *Mézières*, 14 (who gives the wrong date 16 October 1364) and Philippe de Mézières, *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas*, ed. Joachim Smet (Rome, 1954), 170, note 7. Guillaume’s presence in Famagusta is mentioned by an eyewitness, the Franciscan John Carmesson, minister of the province of the Holy Land in Cyprus, in his *Life* of Peter Thomas, see Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 284, note 5 and Mézières, *Life*, 170. For Carmesson’s work and its complex relationship with Mézières’ *Life*, see *ibid.*, Introduction, 42–47.

of his family participated in the campaign.⁸ Leontios was born around 1380 (or, for some scholars, in ca. 1360); we do not know his place of birth but his family name suggests a connection with the villages in the mountainous area of Makhairas and/or with the monastery with the same name. He came from a burgess family with a long tradition of serving the Frankish royal and seigneurial administration. We know of the father, the learned Greek priest Stavrinou, and of three brothers, two of whom, Paul and Nicholas, participated in the siege of Kyrenia in 1374 in the king's army while the third one, Perrin (or Peter), took part in the suppression of the riots of the peasants in 1427.

The two men followed similar careers, both putting their sword and pen to the service of noblemen and kings. At a very young age Philippe entered the service of various Western princes in Italy, Spain, and France as a man of arms. Makhairas participated in the battle of Khirokitia during the 1426 Mamluk invasion of Cyprus in the army of King Janus of Lusignan (1398–1432) and also worked as a secretary for the Frankish noble family of the Nores (or Norès).⁹ Most importantly,

⁸ Mézières, *Contemplatio hore mortis*, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 408, fol. 219r, quoted in Jorga, *Mézières*, 304, note 4, and Mézières, *Oracio tragedica seu declamatoria Passionis Domini nostri Jhesu Christi*, Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 1651, fol. 195v, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 14. Guillaume, his son John, canon of Noyon, and other members of Philippe's family are also mentioned in the latter's 1369 testament, see idem, "Le testament de Philippe de Mézières," *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'étude de l'Europe sud-orientale* 8 (1921), 121, 122, 126–27, 131, 134–35, 137–38. In 1381 he wrote a letter to his nephew John, see Georges Gazier, "Un manuscrit inédit de Philippe de Maisières retrouvé à Besançon," *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 80 (1919), 101–108 and Nicolas Jorga, "L'épître de Philippe de Mézières à son neveu," *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'étude de l'Europe sud-orientale* 8 (1921), 27–40; in his *Oracio tragedica*, fol. 129v and *Le Songe du vieil pelerin*, ed. G. W. Coopland, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1969) (hereafter cited as *Songe*), 2: 417, chap. 280, Philippe refers generally to his Picard relations. In Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 146v–147r there survives a letter by Philippe to another of his brothers, Bishop Gerard of Arras, see Nicolas Jorga, "Une collection de lettres de Philippe de Maizières (Notice sur le ms. 499 de la bibl. de l'Arsenal)," *Revue historique* 49 (May–August 1892), 312–13. See generally idem, *Mézières*, 9–18 and below note 84.

⁹ For the important Nores family, see Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, "L'identité dans la diaspora: travaux et jours de Pierre (avant 1570 (?)-après 1646) et Georges de Nores (1619–1638)," in *Identités croisées en un milieu méditerranéen: le cas de Chypre (Antiquité—Moyen Âge)*, ed. Sabine Fourrier and Gilles Grivaud (Rouen, 2006), 329–53 and Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, "Κύπριοι της διασποράς στην Ιταλία μετά το 1570/1: η περίπτωση της οικογένειας Δενόρες" [Cypriots of the Diaspora in Italy after 1570–1571: the Case of the Nores Family], in *'La Serenissima' and 'La Nobilissima': Venice in Cyprus and Cyprus in Venice*, Proceedings of the Symposium Held at the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation (Nicosia, 21 October 2006), ed. eadem, Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation (Nicosia, 2009), 218–39.

they both served loyally the Lusignan kings as diplomats. According to his *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, Philippe served in an unspecified way Hugh IV (1324–1358) as well,¹⁰ but his name is closely associated with the office of the chancellor of the Kingdom of Cyprus under the reign of Hugh's son, Peter I, a title he would lovingly use when referring to himself until the end of his life ("Regni Cypri Cancellarius" or, after ca. 1380, "quondam cancellarius Cypri").¹¹ We do not know when exactly Philippe assumed the duties of the chancellor, probably in late 1360 or early 1361: he came to Cyprus sometime after Peter assumed kingship on his own right following Hugh's death on 10 October 1359.¹² His first mention in the sources in the capacity of the chancellor dates

¹⁰ Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 103, 172 ("environ xxv ans, a demoré et conversé emprés les Turs et Sarrasins au service... des trois rois de Cypre, l'un après l'autre"), 211 ("il a cinquante ans et plus que cestui vieil soitaitre fu premierement a Jherusalem et demoura un grant temps au service indigne du tres sage et tres catholique Hugue de Lizignen, roy de Jherusalem et de Chypre"), 212 ("demorant au service des deux rois de Chypre, le pere et le fils"). Also see below notes 12–14, 35, 41.

¹¹ For the use of the title, see indicatively: Philippe's *ex libris* in Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 7241, feuille de garde, reproduction in Mézières, *Songe*, 1: frontispiece, a manuscript containing the cartulary of the Holy Sepulcher, see *Le Cartulaire du chapitre du Saint-Sépulcre de Jérusalem*, ed. G. Bresc-Bautier (Paris, 1984), 10–13, and not the *Assises* as G. W. Coopland mistakenly says in Mézières, *Songe*, Introduction, 1: 20 and note 2 and 1: 416, cf. Jorga, *Mézières*, 413; *Ex libris* in another two manuscripts owned by Philippe, cited in Mézières, *Life*, Introduction, 45 and note 45; idem, *Campaign for the Feast of Mary's Presentation*, ed. William E. Coleman (Toronto, 1981), Introduction, 1 and note 2, "Letter," 41, 43, and passim, "The Miracle," 53 and passim, Appendix I, 108, Appendix II, 110; Mézières, *Life*, 169, 170; idem, *Nova religio milicie Passionis Ihesu Christi pro acquisitione sancte civitatis Jherusalem et Terre Sancte*, Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 1943, extracts in Auguste Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits contentant la Règle de la *Militia Passionis Ihesu Christi* de Philippe de Mézières," *Archives de l'Orient latin* 1 (1881), 353 ("indignus cancellarius modici regni Cypri"); Mézières, *La Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion de Ihesu Crist en francois*, ed. Abdel Hamid Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion. Part III (Transcription of the Ashmole MS. 813)," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts* (Alexandria University) 18 (1964), 44 ("indigne chancelier d'un petit royaume de Chypre, jadis apele"); Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 138v, 140v, 141v, 154r, 158r, etc., see Jorga, "Une collection de lettres", 53, 307, 317, 318; Philippe's 1381 letter to his nephew, see Gazier, "Un manuscrit inédit," 102, 108 and Jorga, "L'épître," 27, 38, 40; more references in letters in notes 16–17 below; his 1369 testament, Jorga, "Le testament," 124, 126, 127, etc.; his 1405 testament, Mézières, "Testament de Philippe de Mézières," in idem, *Epistre lamentable*, Appendix II, 9 ("a son vivant chancelier de Chypre"); and his coat of arms as it survives on the brass plate that was made to be placed above his tomb, now at the Museum Mayer van der Bergh in Antwerp, and the inscription on his tombstone, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 511–12, Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, Introduction, 12–13, 42, and *Les Fastes du Gothique. Le siècle de Charles V*, Catalogue of the Exhibition at the Grand Palais (Paris, 1981), no. 94 for a reproduction of the plate.

¹² Mézières, *Oracio tragedica*, fol. 191r; see Jorga, *Mézières*, 109.

to March 1363 while Uomobuono of Mantua is mentioned as holder of the office in a document dated 16 August 1360.¹³ Moreover, in two of his works he says that he served “son maistre et seigneur le vaillant roy de Chipre, par xv ans ou environ,” which could mean that he was in the king’s service for approximately eight years during his reign and for another seven years before he became chancellor.¹⁴ What is certain is that he held the position and the fiefs he was granted on the island until the king’s murder in January 1369,¹⁵ touring Western Europe tirelessly in his effort to promote the king’s plans for a new crusade.¹⁶ Moreover, he remained in the office nominally under Peter II (1369–1382) too, even though he lived in the West: at the end of 1371 he went to Avignon to announce to Pope Gregory XI (1370–1378) the coronation of Peter II, that would take place on 6 January 1372, and on 16 February he pronounced a discourse to celebrate the coronation of the pope himself; he also signed a letter to the doge of Venice dated

¹³ Makhairas says that Peter granted Uomobuono the office after his coronation, on 17 October 1360, but this seems to be a mistake of the text. Offices were usually granted right after a coronation. Peter’s coronation as king of Cyprus took place on 24 November 1358 on his father’s abdication (rather than 1359, also given by the chronicle) and Uomobuono is already mentioned as a holder of the office in August 1360, see Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§86 and 90 (coronation), 100 and 233 (offices) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 111–12 (coronation), 117 and 191 (offices) and Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 230 (Uomobuono), 249 (Philippe); see generally Jorga, *Mézières*, 102, notes 1–2, and Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991; repr. Cambridge, 2000), 189. Also see above notes 10, 12 and below notes 14, 35, 41.

¹⁴ Mézières, *De la Chevalerie de la Passion de Jhesu Crist*, Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS 2251, fols. 17v, 72r–73r, quoted in Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion,” Part I: 49, note 1, Part II: 10, 16; Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 211. I have not been able to consult Muriel Joyce Anderson Brown, *Philippe de Mézières’ “Order of the Passion”: An Annotated Edition*, Ph.D. Dissertation (The University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 1971), which contains an edition of the 1396 French revision in Arsenal, MS 2251 and of the earlier French summary *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion* in Oxford, Bodleian, Ashmole MS 813.

¹⁵ For his Cypriot property, see Jorga, “Le testament,” 120, 125 and 128 (“feodis mei,” “casale de Tarso”), 126 (“domus”), 128 (“jardinus” in Nicosia).

¹⁶ He is mentioned as chancellor of the kingdom in royal correspondence to and from the Cypriot Chancery and in treaties from March 1363 to May 1368, see Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 249, 254, 302, 308 (documents dated to 1363, 1365, and 1368) and 3: 743, 744, 745 and note 1, 746 (four letters dated to 1363 and 1364), idem, “Nouvelles preuves de l’histoire de l’île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan,” *Bibliothèque de l’École des chartes*, 34 (1873), 74, 76, repr. in idem, *Histoire* (Famagusta, 1970), 4: 66, 68 (document dated to 1365). Also see the documents and letters in Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 134r–167r, analysed in Jorga, “Une collection de lettres,” most of which concern political affairs during the reign of Peter I, and below note 73.

1 March 1376 (or 1377) as “cancellarius Cipri.”¹⁷ Leontios may have served both King Janus and King John II of Lusignan (1432–1458) on diplomatic missions, as he is attested in the sources as the latter’s envoy to Asia Minor soon after he rose to the throne in 1432.¹⁸ Philippe’s Cypriot experience gave him first-hand knowledge of the geographical, economic, social, and ethnic realities involved in the liberation of the Holy Land, realities Makhairas knew only too well, although the Cypriot did not share the Frenchman’s profound knowledge of European politics.¹⁹ Both men were extremely pious; Makhairas talks at length in his chronicle about the precious relics found in Cyprus and especially the pieces of the Holy Cross while Mézières particularly cherished a piece of the Holy Cross given to him by Peter Thomas.²⁰ Philippe became a prolific writer late in life, in his fifties;²¹ similarly,

¹⁷ Mézières, *Campaign*, “Letter,” 43–44; idem, *Collacio de leticia creacionis et coronacionis Gregorii pape undecimi*, Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 158r–160r, see Jorga, “Une collection de lettres,” 52–55 and idem, *Mézières*, 40–68; Mas Latrie, “Nouvelles preuves,” 84–86, repr. in idem, *Histoire*, 4: 76–78. Also, cf. his interest in reconciling Genoa and Cyprus as shown in a letter he received from Venice, datable to after 1381, see Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 160v–163r and Jorga, “Une collection de lettres,” 320–22. No other chancellor of the kingdom is known until after the middle of the fifteenth century, see Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 189.

¹⁸ Broquière, *Le Voyage d’Outremer*, 106.

¹⁹ See for example: Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fol. 13v (he did not conceive the creation of the Order frivolously in a tavern in Paris or London), quoted in Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion”, Part I: 51, note 1; Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 172, 211–12 (his plans for the creation of the Order were not put together in a tavern in Paris or London, but constituted the mature product of some fifty years of contacts with the East), 212–17 (detailed account of the advances of the Turks); idem, *Songe*, 1: 221–22, 230–32, 482–83, 2: 176, 210–11, chap. 9, 13, 214, 225. Also see Makhairas’ confused reference to the strife between the Guelf (Γεωφράν) and the Ghibelline (Γγπλήν) factions in Genoa, Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §519 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 364.

²⁰ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§4–8, 26, 30–40, 67–77 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 66–69, 78–79, 81–88, 101–107; Mézières, *Life*, 145, letter in Arsenal, MS 499, fol. 141v, see Jorga, “Une collection de lettres,” 317–18, and idem, “Le testament,” 120, 126, 132. Philippe donated the piece of the Holy Cross to the Confraternity of Saint John the Evangelist in Venice on 23 December 1369, a scene depicted in a painting by Lazzaro Bastiani (1494), now at the gallery of the Accademia in Venice together with a number of paintings inspired by the relic; the document of the donation is published in Mas Latrie, “Nouvelles preuves,” 74, note 1 (at 75–76), repr. in idem, *Histoire*, 4: 66, note 1 (at 67–68). See Jorga, *Mézières*, 402–403 and Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, 1: 284.

²¹ Mézières, *Life*, Introduction, 29–31 and idem, *Songe* (Blanchard), Introduction, 16–24. For the dating of his works, see Bibliography.

Makhairas wrote the version of the chronicle with which he may be credited after 1426, probably in his fifties too.²²

Undoubtedly, their lives and careers influenced their concept of history writing and the nature of the sources they used. Philippe served many literary genres, including hagiography, moral literature, religious treatises of the *Ars moriendi* type, epistles, drama, and allegorical poetry, but not specifically historiography, even though his works provide ample historical information.²³ Although he may have written other works, which have not come down to us, under Leontios' name survives only one historical work in prose which, however, is characterized by an intense literary and dramatic style.²⁴ To a large extent, their work is a kind of memoirs, both drawing on personal recollection to write about events, which they witnessed and in which they were often active participants. They both rely on documents from state archives and their experience in royal administration. For example, in his *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, Philippe describes at length the institutions of France and other countries, praises the law of the *Assises* in Cyprus, and, generally, discusses kingship and government. The information drawn from documentary sources is integrated smoothly in this and other works and only rarely does he cite a letter verbatim.²⁵ Leontios, on

²² Michalis Pieris, "Γύρω από τη χρονολόγηση του Λεοντίου Μαχαιρά" [Dating the *Chronicle* of Leontios Makhairas], *Αφιέρωμα στον Στυλιανό Αλεξίου, Αριάδνη, Επιστημονική Επετηρίδα Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης* [Volume in Honour of Stylianos Alexiou, Ariadne, Annual Review of the School of Letters of the University of Crete] 5 (1989), 229–54. Although complex issues concerning the authorship of and relationship between the recensions are not yet resolved, Makhairas' involvement in an early phase of the process of the creation of the chronicle (or the V version) is undeniable, see Gilles Grivaud, "Ὁ πνευματικὸς βίος καὶ ἡ γραμματολογία κατὰ τὴν περίοδο τῆς Φραγκοκρατίας" [Intellectual Life and Letters during the Frankish Period], in *Ἱστορία τῆς Κύπρου* [History of Cyprus], ed. Theodoros Papadopoulos, 5: *Μεσαιωνικὸν βασιλεῖον – Ἑνετοκρατία* [Medieval Kingdom–Venetian Period], part 2 (Nicosia, 1996), 1067–69 and Nicolaou-Konnari, "Diplomatics and Historiography," 294–95.

²³ For a list of Philippe's works, see Jorga, *Mézières*, vii–viii and Mézières, *Songe* (Blanchard), 54–55.

²⁴ The chronicle has inspired many literary works and theatrical events, but in 1998 Michalis Pieris actually adapted the text itself for the stage and directed it for the University of Cyprus Theatre Workshop, a performance which has known many revivals in Cyprus and abroad, see Michalis Pieris (ed.), *Λεόντιος Μαχαιράς, Χρονικό της Κύπρου* [Leontios Makhairas, Chronicle of Cyprus], *Program*, TH.E.P.A.K. (Nicosia, 1998).

²⁵ See indicatively Mézières, *Songe*, Introduction, 1: 20, 38–55, 60–61, 68–69 and 1: 442–636 (France), 487 (*Assises*), 2: 247–48 (royal letters), 320–30 (fair administration of justice and appointment of good officers), 370–73 (importance of good currency),

the other hand, depends extensively on archival sources, citing, reporting, or mentioning an impressive number of documents and meticulously marking the date of an event.²⁶ They both knew and used the Latin Eastern chronicles of the crusades, whose immediate continuator Makhairas is chronologically.²⁷ But they also both use oral sources, that is, information provided by eyewitnesses more or less reliable.²⁸ They often support their narrative with abundant information on war logistics (lists of officers of the state, lists of the names of the nobles participating in the campaigns, numbers and types of vessels, types of arms and siege machines, ways of financing and supplying expeditions, etc.).²⁹ They wrote in the vernaculars, French and the Greek

204–469 (kingship), chap. 81–177, 98, 235, 254–56, 269, 224–300; also, idem, *Epistre lamentable*, 180–83 (fair administration of the royal estate in Cyprus). For examples of letters, see idem, *Campaign*, “Letter,” 41–52 and idem, *Life*, 76–80 (letter of Emperor John V Palaiologos to Pope Innocent VI), 135–40 (letter of Peter Thomas to Pope Urban V and Emperor Charles IV); Jorga, “Une collection de lettres,” 39–57, 306–22 analyses a register that contains three of Philippe’s speeches, nineteen letters (fourteen emanating from Philippe), and other documents dating from 1366 to 1382, see *Bibl. de l’Arsenal*, MS 499, fols. 134r–167r.

²⁶ See discussion in Nicolaou-Konnari, “Diplomatics and Historiography,” passim, esp. 297–301.

²⁷ Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 114–17 (“croniques” at 115), 139–40 (“la cronique... a laquelle je me transporte”, “selon le texte des croniques” at 140), idem, *Oracio tragedica*, fol. 192r (“cronicas autentiquas terre sancte”), and idem, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 57 (“livre de la conqueste”). Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§9–29, 41–63, 99, and *Diplomatic Edition*, 69–81, 88–100, 116–17; for the continuity between Latin Eastern and Cypriot historiography and, particularly, Makhairas’ relationship with Latin Eastern writers, see Nicolaou-Konnari, “Crusader Ideology.”

²⁸ Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 182 (Cypriot knights), idem, *Life*, 66, 67 (the Archbishop of Cyprus Raymond de La Pradèle who heard the story from a Peter Roquette), and idem, *Songe*, 1: 223 (a Genoese merchant in Cyprus), 485 (his friend Bargardin of Metz), chap. 10, 95. For Leontios, see Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 14–15, Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, “La *Chronique* de Léontios Machéras: Historicité et identité nationale,” in *Matériaux pour une histoire de Chypre (IV^e–XX^e s.)*, ed. Paolo Odorico, *Études Balkaniques. Cahiers Pierre Belon* 5 (1998), 70, and eadem, “Diplomatics and Historiography,” 297.

²⁹ Mézières, *Life*, 125, 127–28 (Christian forces in 1365 in Rhodes) and idem, *Songe*, Index, 2: 527, 529, 534, 535 (entries “gens d’armes,” “lists,” “ships,” “taxes”). Makhairas, *Chronicle*, Index, 2: 327, 328, 329, 330 (entries “offices of State,” “perpiriarii,” “ships and shipping,” “siege engines,” “taxes”) and generally Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, “Η ονοματολογία στα χειρόγραφα του Χρονικού του Λεοντίου Μαχαίρα” [Onomatology in the Manuscripts of the *Chronicle* of Leontios Makhairas], in *Αναδρομικά και Προδρομικά. Approaches to Texts in Early Modern Greek*, Papers from the Conference *Neograeca Medii Aevi V* (Exeter College, University of Oxford, September 2000), ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys (Oxford, 2005), 337, 340–48, esp. 346, and Nicolaou-Konnari, “Diplomatics and Historiography,” 299–300. Cf. below notes 79–81.

Cypriot dialect respectively, although Philippe also wrote in Latin and they both express their preference for the “higher” languages, Latin and the Byzantine *Koine*.³⁰ And they often interpret history in terms of the cause-and-effect relationship between human sin and divine punishment.³¹ Nothing indicates, though, in Makhairas’ chronicle that the younger writer knew or used any of Mézières’ works.

Their works and days also determined the formation of their beliefs and their perception of history but in distinctly different ways. The single inspiration and goal of Philippe’s life was the project of a crusade for the liberation of the Holy Land, finding remedies for the ills of Christendom being a major prerequisite. His crusader ideals were formed at an astonishingly early age, when in 1346 he took part in the minor crusading expedition of Humbert II of Viennois to Smyrna.³² He then journeyed to the Holy Land, arriving in Jerusalem in the spring of 1347; it was in the church of the Holy Sepulcher that he first conceived the idea of forming the Order of the Passion of Christ for the recovery of the Holy Land,³³ an “ardent desire” that was to govern

³⁰ Mézières, *Songe*, 2: 223–24, chap. 229; see Joan B. Williamson’s comments in her edition of Philippe de Mézières, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage* (Washington, D.C., 1993), Introduction, pp. 20–24. Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §158 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 148; see Nicolaou-Konnari, “Onomatology,” 351–53 and eadem, “Diplomatics and Historiography,” 315–16.

³¹ See indicatively: Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 144, 185, 193, 194, 205, 212 (failure to establish the Order of the Passion because of the sins of Christendom), idem, *Life*, 97–100 (the 1361–1362 plague in Cyprus was divine punishment), 134–35 (the Christian fleet caught in a storm after leaving Alexandria was divine retribution for abandoning the city), and idem, *Songe*, 1: 259–60 (the Cypriots had sinned by treacherously killing their king and they had to repent if they were to be saved against the Muslims), 300 (the Genoese invasion was a punishment inflicted upon the Cypriots for their sins, in particular the murder of their king), 487 (“la Terre Sainte fu perdue par les pechiez des Crestiens”), chap. 23, 40, 96; Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§112 (the Turks conquered Cilician Armenia because of the Christians’ sins), 230 (God allowed the rise of the Muslims because of the Christians’ sins), 482 (God allowed Famagusta to be taken by the Genoese because of the Cypriots’ sins), 644 (“we pay no heed to the ills which may be coming upon us, and do much ill, and therefore deserve even more than comes to us”), 651 (God had no forbearance for the Cypriots pillaging Muslim lands) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 122, 190, 338, 430, 431–32, see generally Nicolaou-Konnari, “Chronique,” 59 and eadem, “Crusader Ideology.”

³² On this early period of his life, see now Anne Romine, “Visionary Intellectual or Ordinary Knight? The Early Career of Philip of Mézières,” *Crusades: Medieval Worlds in Conflict*, The Second International Symposium on Crusade Studies, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Saint Louis University (Saint Louis, 17–20 February 2010) (forthcoming).

³³ Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 13r, 73r, quoted in Jorga, *Mézières*, 73, note 3 and 76, note 2 and Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the

his worldview and direct his actions throughout his life. Even in his *Epistre lamentable*, written at the age of seventy, Mézières expresses with force and eloquence the passionate desire of his youth to organize a Christian campaign against the Muslims (“ledit solitaire en sa jeunessse avoit parfait desir, selon la capacité de son jeune sens et feble entendement”), a desire that became inseparable part of him to the extent that he did not wish for anything else so much in the world, as God knows.³⁴ His Cypriot connection is closely related with these ideas. At the end of 1347, on his way back to the West from Jerusalem, he proceeded to Cyprus where he stayed probably for a year or two as he found a sympathetic ear in the person of the young Count of Tripoli, Peter, heir to the throne and two years his younger; he would form a lifelong friendship with Peter, embarking together on a campaign in the West for the promotion of their plans for a crusade. A careful reading of scattered pieces of information provided in his works suggests that this was not Philippe’s first visit to Cyprus: he most probably came to the island and entered Hugh IV and Peter’s service a little before the 1346 crusade since one can easily identify the “grant prince oriental, son maistre,” also described as “jeune prince oriental, lors appellé conte de Triple,” on whose behalf he arranged for the celebration of a Mass in the church of the Holy Sepulcher and to whom he “retourne de la sainte cite de Jherusalem,” with Peter; this young prince appointed Philippe as his envoy charged with the mission to announce to the pope and the Western rulers the foundation of his own secular order of knighthood, the Order of the Sword.³⁵

Passion,” Part II: 10; Mézières, *Nova religio milicie Passionis*, in Molinier, “Description de deux manuscrits”, 353; Mézières, *Oracio tragédica*, fols. 129v–130r. See generally Jorga, *Mézières*, 69–77, Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, Introduction, 16, Joan B. Williamson, “The Chevalerie de la Passion Jhesu Christ: Philippe de Mézières’ Utopia”, *Gesellschaftutopien im Mittelalter / Discours et figures de l’Utopie au Moyen Age*, V. Jahrestagung der Reineke-Gesellschaft / 5^e Congrès annuel de la Société Reineke, ed. D. Buschinger and W. Spiewok, *Jahrbücher der Reineke-Gesellschaft / Annales de la Société Reineke* 5 (Greifswald, 1994), 165–73, and Joan B. Williamson, “Philippe de Mézières and the Idea of Crusade”, *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, ed. Malcolm Barber (Aldershot, 1994), 358–64.

³⁴ Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 210–17; also, idem, *Letter to King Richard II. A plea made in 1395 for peace between England and France*, ed. and trans. G. W. Coopland (Liverpool, 1975), 99–106, and passim (for the “chevalerie du Crucefix” and the “saint passage” that should be undertaken by the kings of France and England).

³⁵ Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 10r, 13r–15v and idem, *Contemplacio hore mortis*, fol. 218v, evidence quoted and discussed in Jorga, *Mézières*, 70, 76–77, 85–86 and Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion,” Part II:

Mézières' literary production was thus intended to serve as crusading propaganda and Peter and his reign are presented accordingly.

Leontios' worldview is less universal and more local. He expresses the concern of a new generation of Cypriots about the survival of the Lusignan Kingdom after the 1426 Mamluk invasion. By the end of the fourteenth century and following the social, economic, and political changes that resulted from Peter's wars, his murder, and the 1373/4 Genoese invasion, feelings of ethnic identity in relation to Cyprus as a geographical and political entity had emerged amongst the particular milieu to which Makhairas belonged and the circles in which he moved, the Greek civil servants and wealthy burgesses and the Frankish ruling class. This common group consciousness was also the product of two centuries of cultural interaction and is expressed in the chronicle by the ethnic name *Kypriotis*, used extensively to denote the entire population of the island, regardless of origin, rite, or social status; language in the form of the Greek Cypriot dialect seems to have been a condition associated with it while religious affiliation remained the main differentiating trait between Greeks and Franks.³⁶ Thus, although Makhairas writes the history of the last crusader kingdom in the Levant, his text in fact reflects this kingdom's evolving character, from a French crusader society with Greek subjects and a vested interest in the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the thirteenth century to a Cypriot society of Franks and Greeks in the fifteenth century. It is within this Cypro-centered context that we must view the chronicle's account of Peter's reign.³⁷

10, 16; also see Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 182 and 211 (he was on the island "cinquante ans a passez"), 212 (Peter's devotion to the Order) and sources in notes 10, 12–14 above; cf. below note 41. On Peter's Order, see below note 47.

³⁶ Gilles Grivaud, "Éveil de la nation chyproise (XII^e–XV^e siècles)," *Kyprios charakter. Quelle identité chypriote? Sources travaux historiques* 43–44 (1995), 105–16, esp. 111, 112–13; Nicolaou-Konnari, "Chronique", 62–66, 75–77; eadem, "Literary Languages in the Lusignan Kingdom of Cyprus in the Thirteenth Century," *Μολυβδοκονδυλο-πελεκητής* 7 (2000), 9–10, 16; eadem, "Ethnic Names and the Construction of Group Identity in Medieval and Early Modern Cyprus: The Case of *Kypriotis*," *Κυπριακαὶ Σπουδαί* [Cypriot Studies] 64–65 (2000–2001), 260–65; eadem, "Onomatology," 333–36, 351–52, 357–58; eadem, "Greeks," in *Cyprus. Society and Culture 1191–1374*, ed. eadem and Chris Schabel, The Medieval Mediterranean 58 (Leiden – Boston, 2005), 53–57; Alexander Beihammer, "Gruppenidentität und Selbstwahrnehmung im zypriischen Griechentum der frühen Frankenzeit. Ein Interpretationsversuch anhand von zeitgenössischen Briefen und Urkunden," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 56 (2006), 205–37; Nicolaou-Konnari, "Diplomatics and Historiography," 296–97.

³⁷ See extensive discussion in eadem, "Crusader Ideology."

Motivated by strong emotions provoked, in Philippe, by the hostilities between England and France and the schism within the Latin Church and, in Leontios, by the dire situation of Cyprus after the Genoese and the Mamluk invasions, both men intend their works to be primarily didactic and moralizing. Nothing indicates that any of Philippe's works or Leontios' chronicle was commissioned. In the prologue to the *Songe*, for example, Philippe explains that his motive is to offer a new Dream for the future to Western Christendom, the work being an allegory of how the West may be reformed in such manner as to be worthy to march to the rescue of the Holy Land; the same ideas are also expressed in most of his works.³⁸ Similarly, Makhairas' intentions are explicitly stated in his *prooimion* and implied in the rest of the chronicle: the destiny of the "well-beloved land of Cyprus" (ἀκριβῆς χώρας Κύπρου) is in God's hands, but people should learn from the "histories of old times" (παλαιὰς ἱστορίας), the "recital" (ἐξήγησις, literally *exegesis* or *narratio*) of the glory and fall of the Lusignan Kingdom caused by the evil Genoese and the infidel Muslims, so that the "sweet land of Cyprus" (γλυκεία χώρα Κύπρου) might come safely through the threats it faces. People should also "find delight" (θέλουν ἀλεγειάζεσθαι) in these old histories and, thus, the narrative, a history of the rule of the Lusignan kings, often becomes the story of their private lives.³⁹

Consequently, the literary nature of the two writers' works complies with their respective ideological intentions and, inversely, the historicity of these texts is submitted to the stylistic conventions of the literary genre they serve. Philippe's writings belong to a wide range of literary genres but all have a propagandist character and in most of them King Peter I is a key figure. Leontios' chronicle borrows from many literary genres, embodying the fusion of the Byzantine and Latin Eastern worlds and transforming the crusader tradition of Latin Eastern historiographers into a Greco-Frankish tradition proper to the socio-cultural reality of fifteenth-century Cyprus, but it is primarily a dynastic history mainly consisting of Peter's encomium: the king's reign occupies

³⁸ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 83–114.

³⁹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§1–2, 11 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 65, 75. The expression "the sweet land of Cyprus" copies the commonplace *la douce France* or *le doux pays de France*, attested in French literature from the twelfth century onwards. For the expression and the chronicle's *prooimion*, see Grivaud, "Intellectual Life and Letters," 1073, 1080, and passim, Nicolaou-Konnari, "Chronique," 58–61, and eadem, "The Crusader Ideology."

approximately 24% of the text, thus constituting the most complete available account of his life.⁴⁰ Its historical character means that the Cypriot chronicle provides a linear and detailed narrative of the events whereas from Philippe's works one can piece together only a fragmentary picture. However, although for both writers the omission of an event as well as the varied importance attributed to the events that are included may be the result of the availability of information, these are also significant insofar as they represent a deliberate choice, thus indicating each author's ideological intentions. Philippe may have the advantage of being a contemporary, but his actual presence on the island hardly amounts to a few years and, in the main, he does not recount events from Peter's reign that he did not actually witness.⁴¹ With the exception of Peter Thomas' *Life*, which was composed in Cyprus during the Lent of 1366, soon after the saint's death, all of Philippe's works were written in the West after the king's death.⁴² On the other hand, Leontios has only a second-hand knowledge of the events surrounding Peter's reign, often depending on the testimony of other people, but he may evaluate them with the benefit of hindsight in a detached and sober way.

PETER I OF LUSIGNAN: CRUSADER AND KING

Undoubtedly, Peter shared Philippe's dream for the liberation of the Holy Land. However, the faithful courtier ignores all other sides to the Cypriot king's character or parameters of his policy and presents only the worshipping image of a man of heroic stature whose life was governed by the crusader ethos; in fact, in the *Songe* Peter serves as the

⁴⁰ On the nature of Makhairas' chronicle, see Grivaud, "Intellectual Life and Letters," 1066–84, Nicolaou-Konnari, "Chronique," 69–71 and passim, eadem, "Diplomatics and Historiography," 297–301 and passim, and eadem, "Crusader Ideology."

⁴¹ One may cautiously propose the following chronological outline: Philippe was for some time in Cyprus in 1346, 1347–1348, and perhaps 1349; he probably came back sometime after Peter's accession to the throne in late 1359; he was in Western Europe and then Alexandria from October 1362 to October 1365 when he returned to Cyprus; he went back to Europe at the end of June 1366 until the fall of 1367 when he returned to Cyprus; he went to the West again at the end of 1367 where he stayed until the king's murder in January 1369, never to come back to Cyprus; see discussion and sources in Jorga, *Mézières*, 70, 76, 85–86, 88, 109, 142, 304, 317, 324, 347, 370, 380–81 and above notes 10, 12–14, 35. There survives surprisingly very little on his presence in Cyprus, see above note 16 for mentions of his name in documents.

⁴² See Mézières, *Life*, Introduction, 31–32 and 184–85.

model of the ideal king for Charles VI of France. Thus, thematically, all the references to the king concern the plans for a crusade and, stylistically, conventional crusader rhetoric is used to describe him. King of Jerusalem and Cyprus, Peter is the most valiant Christian king of his time fighting the enemies of the faith and not his fellow Christians (“roy de Jherusalem et de Chipre, le plus vaillant roy des crestiens en son temps contre les ennemis de la foy,” “illustrissimus princeps Petrus rex Ierusalem et Cypri”); a great king of the East (“un grant roy d’orient”); a God-fearing, devout Catholic (“devotus, Catholicus, et Deum timens”), whose noble intention of liberating his ancestral Kingdom of Jerusalem did not involve any trace of base motives. Although he was the king of a small kingdom (“ung petit roy”), he made the Muslim rulers tremble with fear and brought parts of Turkey into subjection, his valor for ever remembered by the Muslims who have the saying “gladius leonis Petri regis te percussiat”. His deeds equal those of biblical kings, such as the brave king of the Maccabees of the Old Testament who had recaptured Jerusalem.⁴³ Philippe also describes the Cypriot king as a noble lion-king (“vaillant roy Lyon,” “noble roy Lyon”). The image of a lion reminds the epithet “Lionheart” and may be associated with the Lusignan coat of arms, which represents a *lion rampant*.⁴⁴ Moreover, he compares Peter with the king of

⁴³ See indicatively: Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 16v, 17r (“vaillant roy”), quoted in Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion,” Part I: 49, note 1, 50, note 1; Mézières, *Campaign*, “Letter,” 44 (king of the Maccabees); idem, *Epistre lamentable*, 102 (quotation), 182, 211, and 212 (valiant king); idem, *Life*, 94, 96, 102, 128, 135 (quotation), 163, and 167 (valiant king), 97 (devout Catholic), 102 (liberation of the ancestral kingdom); idem, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage*, 279–80 (valiant king); idem, *Nova religio milicie Passionis*, in Molinier, “Description de deux manuscrits,” 353; Mézières, *Oracio tragedica*, fol. 197r; idem, *Songe*, 1: 223 (great king), 258 (little king), 259 (king of the Maccabees), 2: 220, 419, and 436 (valiant king), chap. 10, 23, 228, 281, 284; idem, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 54 (valiant “petit roy catholique”); Philippe’s 1381 letter to his nephew, Jorga, “L’épître”, 33, 38 (victorious king of the Maccabees); Philippe’s speech before the Venetian Senate in 1366 and a letter to the canons of Amiens datable to ca. 1365–1366 in Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 139v, 144v (king of the Maccabees), see idem, “Une collection de lettres,” 49, 311; idem, “Le testament,” 129 (victorious king); idem, *Mézières*, 511, note 5 (“vaillant roy” and “sa grande prouesse” in the inscription on Philippe’s tombstone).

⁴⁴ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 109, 259, 280, and 297–99 (lion), 280 (“petit Lyonnell” for Peter II), Table figurée and chap. 23, 32, 39; Philippe’s 1381 letter to his nephew, Jorga, “L’épître”, 38 (“leo fortissimus”). See a reference to the Lusignan arms in Mézières, *Life*, 128 and generally Weyprecht-Hugo Rüdte de Collenberg, “L’Héraldique de Chypre,” *Cahiers d’héraldique* 3 (1977), 96, 97, 101, nos. 3, 58, 307–308, and figs. 27–29, 31–34, 36–41, 43–45, 49.

the vineyards of Engadi (“le roy des vignes de l’Angady”), thus arbitrarily choosing to interpret the relevant reference to Engadi in the *Song of Solomon*, “Botrus cypri dilectus meus mihi, in vineis En-gaddi” (“My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi”), as meaning that Cyprus is the vineyard or the vineyard is in Cyprus (“*Botrus Cypri in vineis Engady*, c’est à dire, le roison de Chypre es vignes d’Engady”). The biblical vineyards are those near the Dead Sea in Palestine, “cyprus” most probably referring to an aromatic tree, that was perhaps used as a support for the vines;⁴⁵ the confusion of the name of the plant with that of the island was widespread amongst Western travellers in the Middle Ages.⁴⁶ Surprisingly, though, as far as I know Philippe mentions Peter’s Order of the Sword only once, In the Rule of his own Order of the Passion something which perhaps indicates the more limited scope of the Cypriot Order.⁴⁷ Even

⁴⁵ Mézières, *Contemplacio hore mortis*, fol. 218v (Engadi used for Cyprus); idem, *Letter to King Richard II*, 77, 80, 120–23, and 139 (biblical Engadi), 121–22 (Engadi is in Cyprus, 121 for the quotation); idem, *Songe*, 1: 259 (quotation for Peter as king of Engadi), 260 and 295 (Engadi used for Cyprus), chap. 23, 39. For the biblical text, see *Canticum Canticorum*, Latin text of the Vulgate, I: 13, *Song of Solomon*, English text according to King James’ Bible, I: 14 (where “Cyprus” is given as a possible alternative for “camphire”), ἄσμα Ἀσμάτων, Greek text according to the Septuagint, I: 14 (Βότρυς τῆς κύπρου ἀδελφιδός μου ἐμοί, / ἐν ἀμπελώσιν Ἐγκαδδαί), and ἄσμα Ἀσμάτων, Modern Greek transl. George Seferis (Athens, 1972), 19 (εἶναι κλωνάρι τοῦ χεννά ὁ ἀγαπημένος μου γιὰ μέ, / μέσα στ’ ἀμπέλια τοῦ Ἐγκαδδαί, where “henna” renders “kyprou”). Also see Saint Neophytos the Recluse, *Τό ἄσμα Ἀσμάτων τοῦ σοφοῦ Σολομώντος* [The Song of Songs of Wise Solomon], in idem, *Συγγράμματα* [Works], ed. Vasileios St. Pseutogkas (Holy Monastery of Saint Neophytos, Paphos, 2001), 4: 581, 648–49 (a work datable to 1170 or 1171/2), whose text differs only in the writing ἐν Γαδδίν from that of the Septuagint and for whom the meaning of the word “kyprou” is clear as he offers no explanation in his commentary.

⁴⁶ The traveller Wilbrand of Oldenburg, who visited Cyprus in 1211, places the vineyards near Limassol while Ludolf von Suchen, on the island in 1350, gives two vineyards with the same name, one in the district of Paphos, which belonged to the Hospitallers, and one in Limassol, see Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 35, 212, 213 and *Excerpta Cypria. Materials for a History of Cyprus*, English trans. Claude Delaval Cobham (Cambridge, 1908), 14, 19. See Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 35, note 1 and 212, note 8, who says that these travellers take “le nom d’un arbuste, le Henné ou *Cyprous* du Cantique des Cantiques, pour le nom de l’île de Chypre,” Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 137, and Mézières, *Letter to King Richard II*, Introduction, p. xxx and note 54, where the editor plausibly suggests that the name “marouant” given by Philippe to the wine produced by the Cypriot vineyards of Engaddi is a corrupt form of the Greek word “mavro” (“black”), the name of a local variety.

⁴⁷ Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fol. 15v, quoted in Jorga, *Mézières*, 76, note 2, 83, note 2, 120, note 3 and Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, Introduction, 16. On Peter’s Order, see André Favyn, *Le Théâtre d’honneur et la Chevalerie...* (Paris, 1620), book IX, Jorga, *Mézières*, 83–85, S. Baldan, *Il reale Ordine dei cavalieri di Cipro detto della Spada e del Silenzio* (Venice, 2002), and Evangelia Skoufari, *To Τάγμα του Ξίφους*

more surprisingly, he repeats a common mistake when he says that King Peter was “primogenitus” while he was in fact second-born and inherited the throne only after his brother Guy’s death in 1343, to whom Philippe refers on another occasion.⁴⁸

Accordingly, for the loyal chancellor Cyprus was the ideal Christian kingdom under the rule of his beloved king (“serenissimo regi meo Ierusalem et Cypri amantissimo domino meo”).⁴⁹ Through the triumphs of his crusades in the East, the island became “the frontier of Catholic Christendom, on which the banner of the Cross was raised against the enemies of the Faith,” a powerful kingdom feared by the infidel, a refuge for the soldiers of God and the pilgrims. He painfully emphasizes the sharp contrast between the great days of the reign of Peter, when a few Christian ships could scatter enemy fleets of several hundred, and the disasters that had befallen upon Cyprus and the islands of the Greek Archipelago after his death.⁵⁰ Philippe links the Cypriot legal system with that of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, reporting the tradition according to which the law of the *Assises*, the legendary *Letters of the Sepulcher* which were supposedly lost in 1187, was first composed at the time of Godefroy of Bouillon in Jerusalem and then brought to Cyprus.⁵¹ Admiring the most efficient law of the *Assises*, he claims that in Cypriot courts affairs between the king, the nobles, the Church, and the simple people were regulated speedily in four or five days without the presence of advocates. Naturally, Philippe oversimplifies the legal situation in Cyprus for the benefit of his argument. What he probably means is that professional lawyers, trained in Roman law, were excluded from the proceedings. However, a vassal, in his capacity as a member of the High Court experienced in the court procedure and familiar with the customary law as administered in this court, could be designated to act as counsel (both in the sense of legal advisor and pleader) or as *avantparlier* (a person who

[The Order of the Sword], *Chronikon*, Sunday Supplement of *Politis* (daily newspaper, Nicosia) no. 42 (7 December 2008) with more bibliography. Cf. above note 35.

⁴⁸ Mézières, *Life*, 89, 94; see Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 143–44, 146.

⁴⁹ Mézières, *Life*, 167.

⁵⁰ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 258–60, 295–300, 2: 419, chap. 23, 39–40, 281; Philippe’s 1381 letter to his nephew, Jorga, “L’épître”, 38.

⁵¹ See Peter W. Edbury, “Law and Custom in the Latin East: *Les Letres dou Sepulcre*”, in *Intercultural Contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean. Studies in Honour of David Jacoby*, ed. Benjamin Arbel (London, 1996) [= *Mediterranean Historical Review* 10/1–2 (1995)], 71–79, repr. in Peter W. Edbury, *Kingdoms of the Crusaders. From Jerusalem to Cyprus*, Variorum Reprints (Aldershot, 1999), no. IX.

spoke on behalf of the witness), while the presence of *avantparliers* as counsels of litigants was necessary at the Court of Burgesses.⁵² Thanks to its commerce, protected by the wise king, the island prospered in population and resources and Peter could thus finance his expeditions against the infidel, the French king advised to follow the Cypriot example. Philippe also describes the merchandise stored and the riches accumulated in Famagusta as well as the extent of the business conducted by the Italian merchants in the city. Moreover, he praises the Cypriot arrangement for the social accommodation of Jews, providing us with the interesting piece of information that they lived in special quarters reserved for them outside the cities and that they only came in contact with the Christians to do business. He even mentions that he witnessed in Cyprus the disaster caused by the locusts and describes “l'estanc merveilleux de Salines en Chipre,” the salt lake whose salty waters resemble ice in summertime. The “vent subtil de Chypre,” though, stands metaphorically as the figure of the vice of Pride, and the non-observation of the holiday of Sunday in a perhaps deliberately unspecified Christian kingdom in the East is condemned.⁵³ And, of course, he does not neglect to refer to his own involvement in Cypriot affairs, describing himself as a royal messenger who labored in the service of the king of Cyprus for fifteen years, travelling incessantly in order to preach on behalf of his prince the holy war and the need for the foundation of the Order of the Passion.⁵⁴ However,

⁵² Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 486–7, chap. 96; cf. idem, *Epistre lamentable*, 180. See Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 382, note 1 and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 187. For the role of the “conseill” and the “avantparlier” in the High Court and the Court of Burgesses, see John of Ibelin, *Le Livre des Assises*, ed. Peter W. Edbury, *The Medieval Mediterranean* 50 (Leiden – Boston, 2003), Index, 826, 830 with several references, Philip of Novara, *Le Livre de Forme de Plait*, ed. and trans. Peter W. Edbury, *Cyprus Research Centre, Texts and Studies in the History of Cyprus LXI* (Nicosia, 2009), 169, 197, 337, *Assises de la Cour des Bourgeois*, in *Recueil des historiens des croisades, Lois, Les assises de Jérusalem*, ed. A. Beugnot, 2 vols. (Paris, 1841–1843), 2: xlv, 30, 93–94, and *Abrégé du Livre des Assises de la Cour des Bourgeois*, in the same volume, 240, 245, 309, 351.

⁵³ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 298–99 (Famagusta), 2: 419 (commerce), 285 (Jews), 470 variant (Salines), 146–47 (Sunday holiday), chap. 39, 281, 246, 301, 197 and Index, 2: 537 (several references to the wind); idem, *Letter to King Richard II*, 132 (locusts). No serious locust attacks are attested in the sources during Philippe's stay on the island but this does not mean he did not see one, see Gilles Grivaud, “Villages désertés à Chypre (fin XII^e–fin XIX^e siècles)”, *Μελέται καὶ Ὑπομνήματα* [Studies and Memoranda] 3 (Nicosia, 1998), 324–25, 437 and below note 59. Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 382–83 identifies with no hesitation the unspecified kingdom with that of Cyprus.

⁵⁴ Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 17v, 72r–73r, quoted in Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion,” Part I: 49, notes 1, 3, Part II: 10, 16–17; Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 211–12.

there are some inconsistencies between this picture of the ideal prince and his kingdom and Philippe's views on kingship and government as exposed in his *Songe*. For example, his opinions on war being the last resort after long peace discussions have failed and on how a king should never risk his royal person highly diverge from Peter's image of a crusader king using military aggression and actively participating in his campaigns.⁵⁵

Contrary to Mézières' monolithic portrait, Makhairas depicts several aspects of Peter's personality that are not all flattering but allow the chronicler to draw a more human picture and propose a more complex interpretation of the king's policy and motives. This does not mean that Peter's heroic side as a defender of the Christians is underrated. On the contrary, being a loyal Lusignan subject, Makhairas portrays "King Peter the Great" (ὁ ρὲ Πιερ ὁ μέγας) as a charismatic, indefatigable ruler and soldier, who worked zealously "for the holy church and avenged the wrongs of the Christians." Governed by "his desire to bring an army (for Syria) to go to destroy the miscreant Saracens," he defied the sultan in a very chivalric manner ("I swear to you on my faith as the Christian I am" that "I shall come down upon you and will give you to know what kind of man I am; and my faith is in God, that he will give me the victory"). He was accordingly highly estimated in the West, renowned for his "noble deeds" (καλὰ ἔργα) and described by a Western lord as "a good and orthodox Christian."⁵⁶ However, only indirectly does the text allude to Peter's crusader intention of liberating the Holy Land, even though the rightfulness of the cause of his wars is not openly questioned. One of the rare cases where such a goal is explicitly ascribed to the king is connected with the queen's marital indiscretions. The king attributes his wife's unfaithfulness to divine punishment for his vain ambitions and pride because "I sought to win what my ancestors had not... God made me king of Cyprus and gave me also the title of Jerusalem and before the time appointed I pressed on and was zealous to win the kingdom of Jerusalem."⁵⁷ The picture of a king who questions his crusader call constitutes an excellent stylistic

⁵⁵ Idem, *Songe*, 2: 373–81, chap. 270–71. For a good analysis of the allegorical representation of Peter and Cyprus in the *Songe*, see Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, "Images littéraires de Chypre et évolution de l'esprit de croisade au XIV^e siècle," in *Progrès, réaction, décadence dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Emmanuèle Baumgartner and Laurence Harf-Lancner (Droz, 2003), 129–35.

⁵⁶ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§39, 216, 153, 228, 230, 113, 216–17 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 88, 181, 143, 189, 190–91, 123, 181–82.

⁵⁷ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§243, 251 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 196, 200.

device used by Makhairas to criticize indirectly the outcome of Peter's wars for Cyprus, the legitimacy of the dynasty thought to be achieved with regards to the existence of the Kingdom of Cyprus and not the recovery of that of Jerusalem as the Lusignans' ancestral kingdom. The awareness, however, that the Lusignan king of Cyprus was also by rights "the heir of the kingdom of Jerusalem" (κληρονόμον... τοῦ ρηγάτου Ἱεροσολύμου) is present in the chronicle.⁵⁸

Makhairas too speaks of the law of the *Assises* (ἀσίζες), which he claims was introduced by Guy of Lusignan (1192–1194), the first crusader ruler of Cyprus, without failing to underline on four occasions that Peter violated this law. His description of the thriving Famagusta commerce reminds the one by Philippe. Leontios, however, does not attribute this prosperity to the king's wise policy but to the embargo imposed by "the most holy pope" in his effort to assist "the poor Cypriots" (οἱ πτωχοὶ οἱ Κυπριῶτες) who were surrounded by Muslim people, explaining at the same time that the king financed his wars with the money he received from the enfranchisement of the burgess class of the *perpyriarioi*. Moreover, he criticizes the Famagustans for their vulgar nouveau-riche behavior, citing the story of the Lakha family, and condemns their loose morals, their treatment of slaves, and their arrogance ("God allowed Famagusta to be taken by the Genoese because of the Cypriots' sins"). The chronicle mentions three locust attacks, none of which occurred during Peter's reign but in 1351, 1409, and 1413.⁵⁹ Interestingly, Philippe's role in Peter's government is entirely effaced, the chancellor mentioned only once as one of the ambassadors sent to Genoa in 1365 to negotiate the peace treaty.⁶⁰ The

⁵⁸ See indicatively Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§87, 89–90, 104, 217, 251, 320–24 (320 for the quotation) and, particularly for the king's title, 251, 346, 512, 515, 516, 616 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 111, 112, 119, 182, 200, 244–46 (244 for the quotation) and, for the king's title, 200, 258, 359, 362, 363, 418–19; cf. Nicolaou-Konnari, "Onomatology," 345, eadem, "Diplomatics and Historiography," 312–13, and eadem, "Crusader Ideology."

⁵⁹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§27, 29, 99, and 327 (*Assises*), 269 and 277–78 (Peter), 91 (embargo), 157 and 215 (financing the wars), 91–96 and 452 (Lakha family), 482 (sins), 40, 66, 637, and 639 (locusts) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 79–80, 81, 116, and 247–48 (*Assises*), 211 and 217–19 (Peter), 112–13 (embargo), 147–48 and 180–81 (financing the wars), 112–15 and 323 (Lakha family), 338–39 (sins), 88, 101, and 427–28 (locusts). For the locust attacks, see Grivaud, "Villages désertés à Chypre," 324–25, 437.

⁶⁰ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §153 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 144, the form of the name varying according to the manuscript: Φιλίππας τε Μαντζηέρες / Φιλίππε τε Μαντζιερες / Φιλίππε τε Μαντζιερης ὁ τζαντζιλιέρης / τζαντζιλιέρες τῆς Κύπρου. For the treaty, see documents in Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 254–66; for a comparison of the treaty with

phrase “desire came into their hearts to go overseas to the West to see...strange lands,” when they “saw the men who came from the West”, referring to Peter’s attempt to go to the West with his younger brother John in secret without their father’s leave in 1349, might suggest a connection between the princes’ flight and Philippe’s visit to Cyprus in 1347, but the episode is described in the chronicle as simply a young man’s escapade.⁶¹

It is within this diverging ideological context that we must view the way Peter’s expeditions against the Turkish-controlled southern coastlands of Asia Minor in the 1360s and his capture of Alexandria in 1365 are perceived by the two writers. The importance attributed to the role of Peter Thomas, Apostolic Legate to the East since 1359, Latin Archbishop of Crete in 1363, and titular Latin Patriarch of Constantinople in 1364, in these events emphasizes their difference of perspective.⁶² Mézières’ encounter with the legate entirely transformed him and his love and loyalty to his spiritual father are expressed in his hagiographical *Vita* of the Carmelite, a eulogy of his friend and mentor. It was most probably in Cyprus where the two men met but we do not know exactly when. Philippe describes with touching words the legate’s arrival at the port of Paphos, his warm reception by the royal family and the barons of the realm, and the solemn ceremony

the text given by Makhairas, Nicolaou-Konnari, “Diplomatics and Historiography,” 320–22; generally, Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 155, 166. Interestingly, Guillaume de Machaut too ignores completely Mézières in his work, see Guillaume de Machaut, *La Prise d’Alexandre (The Taking of Alexandria)*, ed. and English trans. R. Barton Palmer (New York – London, 2002), Introduction, 18–20.

⁶¹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§79–85 (79 for the quotation) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 108–111 (108 for the quotation). For the episode, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 89–91, Sir George Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1940–1952), 2: 302–304, Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, pp. 146–47, and Chris Schabel, “Hugh the Just: The Further Rehabilitation of King Hugh IV Lusignan of Cyprus,” *Επετηρίδα Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών (Κύπρου)* [Cyprus Research Centre Annual Review] 30 (2004), 134–39, who also cites other sources.

⁶² Mézières, *Life*, 84–85, 89 (Legate of the league that was formed in 1357 between the Holy See, Cyprus, Venice, and the Knights Hospitallers for the defence of the Eastern Mediterranean and particularly Smyrna), 84–85 (Apostolic Legate), 104–105 (Archbishop of Crete), 117–19 (Patriarch of Constantinople). See generally Luke Wadding, O. F. M., *Vita et res gestae B. Petri Thomae Aquitani, ex Ordine B. Mariae Virginis a Monte Carmelo, patriarchae Constantinopolitani et sedis apostolicae legati* (Lyons, 1637), A. Parraud, *Vie de Saint Pierre Thomas* (Avignon, 1895), Rev. P. S. Burk, *A mediaeval Hero of Carmel: being an historical sketch of the life and times of Saint Peter Thomas, Carmelite, Bishop and Martyr, and Patriarch of Constantinople* (London, 1901), and F.J. Boehlke, *Pierre de Thomas, Scholar, Diplomat, and Crusader* (Philadelphia, 1966).

of Peter's coronation as king of Jerusalem by the legate in Famagusta, but it is not clear if he was present at any of these occasions.⁶³ In the *Life*, four chapters concern the legate's involvement in Cypriot affairs during Peter's reign. Philippe draws the portrait of a holy man, attenuating the circumstances of his attempt to confirm the Greek clergy of Cyprus at Santa Sophia cathedral sometime after the coronation of Peter I as King of Jerusalem on 5 April 1360 and exalting his contribution during the pestilence of 1361–1362. He is presented to have played a central role for the materialization of Peter's crusading plans, joining forces with the king and his chancellor and relentlessly campaigning for the crusade in Europe. His involvement in the 1361 Satalia expedition and the planning and execution of the capture of Alexandria is duly emphasized. Philippe also describes lovingly the saint's last days in Famagusta, where he died on 6 January 1366 with the chancellor at his deathbed. In his 1369 testament, Philippe makes provisions for the translation of the saint's relics to France and informs us that the latter's nephew Raymond Robert was Archdeacon of Famagusta.⁶⁴ Makhairas, on the other hand, says very little on the legate but, unlike Mézières, he provides dates. In fact, Peter Thomas is mentioned only twice with his name, on the occasion of his arrival in the island on Sunday, 8 December 1359, which Leontios places at the port of Kyrenia disagreeing with Philippe (φρέρε Πιέρης τε Τουμᾶς ἀπὲ τὸν ὄρδινον τοῦ Κάρμυ / "Brother Peter de Thomas of the Order of the Carmel"), and at Peter's coronation in Famagusta on Easter Sunday, 5 April 1360 (φρὲ Πιερ Τουμᾶς τοῦ λεγάτου τοῦ πάπα ἀπὲ τὸν ὄρδινον τοῦ Κάρμυ / "Brother Peter Thomas the pope's legate, of the Order of the Carmel"). On another five occasions Peter Thomas is simply designated in his legatine capacity. The chronicle does not

⁶³ Mézières, *Life*, 89–92 (arrival of the legate and Peter's coronation), 101 and 163–68 (Philippe's spiritual teacher and friend); idem, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage*, 279–80 (Peter's mother Alice prepares personally the legate's meals). See above notes 12, 35 for possible dates of Philippe's arrival in Cyprus.

⁶⁴ Makhairas, *Life*, 96–97 (Satalia), 92–94 (confirmation incident), 97–100 (pestilence), 102–24 (campaigning for the crusade), 125–41 (Alexandria), 142–58 (death, esp. 148, 153 for Philippe's presence at his deathbed), 163–88 (canonization); Jorga, "Le testament," 121, 128–30. For the cathedral incident and the pestilence, also see Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, "Alterity and Identity in the Works of Philippe de Mézières and Leontios Makhairas" (forthcoming). In Philippe's 1381 letter to his nephew John, the figure of the legate is used as an example of holiness, see Gazier, "Un manuscrit inédit," 105 and Jorga, "L'épître," 33–35; also see idem, "Une collection de lettres," 44–45 for the legate's encomium in Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 137r–138v.

mention the 1361–1362 plague, only an attack in 1363 when Peter Thomas was not in Cyprus, while the longest reported incident concerning his person is his unhappy confrontation with the Greek clergy at Santa Sophia cathedral. The legate's participation in the Alexandria campaign and his death are only briefly mentioned; the chronicle gives the wrong date 6 June 1366 for his death while two of the manuscript versions claim that the legate joined the Cypriot embassy for the West in Rhodes, where he actually died.⁶⁵

In the *Songe*, Philippe makes only passing references to Peter's heroic exploits against the Turks in Southern Anatolia, vaguely mentioning his victory in Satalia, while in his 1381 letter to his nephew John, canon of Noyon, he refers to the capture of both Satalia and Gorchigos ("Co[r]icos"); in the *Epistre lamentable* he simply says that Gorchigos ("Curch") was in Christian hands. But in the *Life* the 1361 capture of Satalia is described at length in purely crusading terms: the king's intention was to destroy the enemies of faith, God's glory triumphed, and the legate, who accompanied the king, celebrated the divine office and comforted the Christians of the country. Although he does not specifically say so in any of his works, Philippe most probably participated in the campaign; this is suggested by the fact that in his 1369 testament he says that he took a young Turk from Satalia whom he converted to Christianity giving him the name of John Satalia and who remained in his service.⁶⁶ Makhairas' narrative discusses at length Peter's expeditions without justifying them as wars sanctioned by God for the restoration of Christian jurisdiction; on the contrary, the text allows the reader to form a realistic view of their economic and political causes, the island's commercial prosperity said

⁶⁵ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§101 (arrival and incident with the Greek clergy), 104 (coronation), 66 and 135 (plague), 167, 169, and 172–73 (Alexandria campaign), 174 (death) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 117–18 (arrival and incident with the Greek clergy, V36v erroneously giving Monday as the day of the arrival), 119 (coronation), 101 and 134 (plague), 152, 153, and 154–55 (Alexandria), 155–56 (O82v and especially R49v for the legate dying in Rhodes). Jorga, *Mézières*, 105, based on an old edition of the chronicle, gives wrong possible dates for the arrival. For the plague, see Grivaud, "Villages désertés à Chypre," 295, 439.

⁶⁶ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 295, 2: 227, 419, chap. 39, 231, 281; for Philippe's letter to his nephew, see Jorga, "L'épître", 38; Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 217; idem, *Life*, 96–97; idem, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 54; Satalia is also mentioned in the inscription on his tombstone, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 511, note 5, who, *ibid.*, 109 thinks that Philippe's presence in Satalia is not certain but revises his views in idem, "Le testament," 123, 131, 134, 139.

to be threatened by Turkish piracy and the growing Venetian presence in Alexandria following the relaxation of the papal embargo on Christian trade with Egypt in 1344, which meant that Famagusta was bypassed.⁶⁷ Peter's anti-Turkish military and naval expeditions are thus presented as intended to contain Turkish aggression and curb piracy.⁶⁸ Makhairas describes how the Armenian inhabitants of Gorhigos (τὸ Κουρίκος, or Κούρικος) handed over their town to Peter in 1360 because of their king's inability to defend them against the advances of the Turks, the Lusignan king's motives said to be his wish "to possess land in Turkey."⁶⁹ Similarly, the Satalia campaign is explicitly said to be conducted both for the defense of the Kingdom of Cyprus and because of the city's commercial potential; Peter Thomas' participation in the expedition is completely ignored in the text.⁷⁰ Subsequent Cypriot raids on other places along the coast of Anatolia, including Myra, Anamur, Siq, and Alaya, are described in terms of pillaging and piracy.⁷¹

Peter's first journey to Europe in 1362–1365 is described at length in the *Life* as intended to rally the support of Western rulers for his planned expedition, the king wisely realizing the weakness of his own resources. This expedition conformed to all the criteria of a crusade and to Philippe's own definition of "bellum justum," which he gives in his *Oracio tragedica* ("pro republica, pro fide, pro ecclesia"): it had a just cause ("sancta et devota intentione" or "intentione bona"), Peter described as "athletam fidelem Christianos orientis defensurum" who launched a "holy war" against the enemies of faith for the liberation of his ancestral Kingdom of Jerusalem; it was declared by the pope, Philippe providing a detailed description of Peter taking the cross and the proclamation of the crusade in Avignon on 31 March 1363; and it

⁶⁷ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §91 and passim and *Diplomatic Edition*, 112–13 and passim. See discussion in Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 150–3 and Nicolaou-Konnari, "The Crusader Ideology."

⁶⁸ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§114, 121, 126, 133, 317 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 124, 127, 130, 133, 243.

⁶⁹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§112–15 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 122–24. For the events, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 110–15 and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 163–64; for the form of the toponym, Jorga, *Mézières*, 111–12 and Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 96–97.

⁷⁰ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§117–28 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 125–31. For the events, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 119–28 and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 163.

⁷¹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§116, 124, 126–28, 132–35, 137–44, 150–52, 194–95, 200–201, 317–18 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 124–25, 128–31, 133–35, 135–38, 140–43, 167–69, 171–72, 242–44.

was preached by the legate. Philippe mentions or implies that the king visited Rhodes, Venice, Milan, Genoa, the papal court in Avignon, the royal courts of France and England, Poland, and Hungary as well as the German emperor. He does say, though, that the king stayed longer in Genoa “pro aliquibus negotiis propriis,” probably referring to the negotiations for the renewal of the city’s trade privileges in 1363.⁷² Naturally, the contribution of Philippe and Peter Thomas to the king’s European tour is given a prominent place, especially the part they played in mediating for peace between Milan and the pope in 1364 and Genoa and Cyprus in 1365 and in overcoming Venice’s reluctance to assist the cause of the crusade because of the revolt in Crete (the one known as Revolt of Saint Tito, instigated in September 1363 by the Venetian settlers on the island).⁷³ Philippe also emphasizes the legate’s spiritual role, giving an emotional description of how he offered consolation to the Cypriot king in Venice in November 1364 for not having succeeded to convince the princes of the West to give him their aid.⁷⁴

In Makhairas’ text, the crusader purpose of Peter’s journey is under-rated in favor of his dynastic dispute with Hugh of Lusignan, Prince of Galilee, also mentioned by Mézières but in a different context; Makhairas claims that the king was summoned to appear before the pope by Innocent VI (1352–1362) for the settlement of this problem,

⁷² Mézières, *Life*, 102–6 (102, 105, 106 for the quotations); idem, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 16v–17r, quoted in Hamdy, “Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion,” Part I: 49, note 2, Part II: 10 (the king’s itinerary); Philippe’s 1381 letter to his nephew, see Jorga, “L’épître,” 38. As Joël Blanchard remarks, Mézières, *Songe* (Blanchard), Introduction, 14, Queen Truth’s allegorical journey is strikingly similar to Peter’s real journey. The expression “athlete of Christ” is also used in the letters of Urban V, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 341 and note 2.

⁷³ Mézières, *Life*, 107–17, 122–23 and Appendices VI–VIII, 213–24; generally, Jorga, *Mézières*, 202–72. It is not clear in the *Life* that Philippe actually accompanied the legate to Genoa but it may be inferred from his *Contemplacio hore mortis*, fol. 218v, quoted in Jorga, *Mézières*, 246, 261; Joachim Smet mistakenly considers this reference to be in the *Songe*, see Mézières, *Life*, 123, note 40 and 223, note 10. For letters to and from Philippe concerning his activities in 1364, see Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 144v–146v and Jorga, “Une collection de lettres,” 306–11. For letters of the doge of Venice to the king of Cyprus, the pope, Peter Thomas, and Philippe concerning the Cretan revolt, see Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 3: 742–47 and more references in Sally McKee, “The Revolt of St. Tito in Fourteenth-Century Venetian Crete: a Reassessment,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 9/2 (1994), 173–204 and Nicos Coureas, “King Peter I of Cyprus and the Rebellion of 1363 on Crete,” in *Πρακτικά του Τρίτου Διεθνούς Κυπριολογικού Συνεδρίου* [Proceedings of the Third International Conference of Cypriot Studies], 2, *Medieval Section*, ed. Athanasios Papageorgiou (Nicosia, 2001), 519–26.

⁷⁴ Mézières, *Life*, 119–21.

something that is not corroborated in papal letters. The chronicle mentions the king visiting Rhodes, Venice, the papal court in Avignon, France, Genoa, and Germany but in a confused order and a very fragmentary way while the revolt in Crete is omitted completely.⁷⁵ Peter's crusading goal is mentioned in a single passing phrase ("and the king begged the rulers of the West to send a force to go against the men of false belief, to win back the kingdom of Jerusalem, the house of Christ") and so is the preaching of the expedition by the legate in Rhodes ("everyone with zeal and faith should assemble speedily, every Christian to go to attack the men of alien faith"). These are, in fact, the only instances in the text where the description of an expedition corresponds more or less to the definition of a crusade.⁷⁶ At the same time, Makhairas does not hesitate to demystify its causes and implications: Peter's "desire to go to destroy the miscreant Saracens" made him grant privileges to the Genoese with the 1365 treaty so "that there might be peace between them, and he be not hindered in his expedition," while the people of Famagusta reacted to the news of the campaign in a clearly more pragmatic and self-interested way, "bitterly vexed" (ἐπικράνθησαν πολλά) because of the negative impact Peter's plans would have on their trade.⁷⁷

The main lines of the narrative of the events surrounding the capture of Alexandria on Friday, 10 October 1365 are roughly the same in Philippe's *Life* and Makhairas' chronicle. The two writers agree on the dates and even on the hour Alexandria fell (Philippe gives "hora nona", about 3 p.m., and Leontios τὴς δ' ὥρης, "at the fourth hour"), although Makhairas gives a bigger number for the ships participating in the expedition.⁷⁸ Similarly, a comparison of the names of the dif-

⁷⁵ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§105–108, 129, and 131 (dispute), 109–10 (the king sends envoys to the West), 129, 131, 136–37, 149, 153, 159–61, and 164–69 (journey) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 119–21 and 131–32 (dispute), 121–22 (envoys to the West), 131–33, 134–35, 140, 143, 149–50, and 151–53 (journey); Mézières, *Life*, 94. For Peter's first journey to Europe, see documents in Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 237–73 and discussion in Jorga, *Mézières*, 142–201, Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 2: 324–28, and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 164–66.

⁷⁶ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§131, 169 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 132–33, 153.

⁷⁷ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§153, 160, 170 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 143, 149, 153. For a positive mention of the king's efforts to organise a crusade by a contemporary Byzantine source, see Démétrius Cydonès, *Correspondance*, ed. R.-J. Loenertz, 2 vols., Studi e Testi 186, 208 (Vatican City, 1956, 1960), 1: no. 93 (letter dated 1364).

⁷⁸ For the date, see Mézières, *Life*, 132, idem, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fol. 17r, quoted in Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," Part I: 50, note 1, and Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §171 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 154; discussion

ferent vessels that formed the crusader fleet and are given by the two authors yields interesting analogies. In the *Life Mézières* cites “galeas, huisseria, ligna, naves, et alia naviglia;” in the *Songe* he adds that in Alexandria he actually saw the Cypriot army (“gracieuse petite armée”) make use of about sixteen “taf(f)oresses,” a medium-sized, agile vessel of twenty to thirty oars that can carry sixteen to twenty horses and can penetrate into rivers and inflict much damage.⁷⁹ Makhairas says that the crusader fleet consisted of σατίες (light vessels), καραβία (generally ships or merchant ships), περιστερία (“doves”), κάτεργα (galleys), and the more general ξύλα (ships, corresponding to “ligna”) and ἄρμενα (sails).⁸⁰ The loanwords ταφουρέ(ν)τζες or ταφουρίτζες (“taforesses”), λουσέργια (large transport vessels, corresponding to “huisseria”), and νάβες (sailing ships or merchant ships, corresponding to “naves”) are used in the chronicle with relation to other expeditions.⁸¹ Moreover,

in Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 280, note 2, Jorga, *Mézières*, 286 and note 5, 295 and note 4, and Atiya, *Crusade*, 348. For the number of the ships, see Mézières, *Life*, 125, 127 and Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§162, 167 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 150, 152–3; discussion in Jorga, *Mézières*, 280, note 7, 282 and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 166.

⁷⁹ Mézières, *Life*, 125, 127 and idem, *Songe*, 2: 435–36, chap. 284, where he also mentions “paverres,” “barges,” “lins,” “navires,” “nefs,” and “vaisseaux,” but not specifically for Alexandria; see ibid., Introduction, 1: 56–59 for Philippe’s knowledge of seafaring. The *taforesses* are also mentioned by Machaut, *La Prise d’Alixandre*, 118, line 1878 (“tafourees”) and Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, *La pratica della mercatura*, ed. Allan Evans (Cambridge, Mass., 1936; repr. New York, 1970), 17 (“taferese”), 58 (“tafereste”), see Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 277, note 1. See Frédéric E. Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l’ancienne langue française et de tous les dialectes du IX^e au XV^e siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris 1880–1902), 7: 623 and Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti, eds., *Grande Dizionario della Lingua Italiana*, UTET (Turin, 1961–2002), 20: 665.

⁸⁰ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §162 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 150. The name σατία obviously derives from the Italian *saettia* (“arrow”), see Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 104 and below note 81. The name περιστέριον most probably constitutes a translation of the French *colombel*, a word that describes a small vessel and is attested under a variety of forms, see for example *Cronaca del Templare di Tiro* (1243–1314). *La caduta degli Stati Crociati nel racconto di un testimone oculare*, ed. and trans. Laura Minervini (Naples, 2000), §§173, 207, 220, 327 and the late sixteenth-century Italian translation of the chronicle’s Ravenna recension, Diomede Strambaldi (=Strambali), *Chronique de Strambaldi*, in *Chroniques d’Amadi et de Strambaldi*, ed. René de Mas Latrie, 2nd part (Paris, 1893), 65 (“colombi”); see discussion in Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 113, Henry Kahane and Renée Kahane, “On Venetian Byzantinisms”, *Romance Philology* 27 (1974), 362, and *Cronaca del Templare di Tiro*, 401. The Latin word *columbarium* designated the oarport, see John H. Pryor and Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, *The Age of the Δρόμων. The Byzantine Navy ca 500–1204* (Leiden, 2006), 280, 426, 442. Also see ibid., 188–89, 210, 221, 246, 248, 258, 408 (*karaboi/karabia*), 418–21, 444, 447 (*katerga*), 246, 248 (*armena*).

⁸¹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§127 and 205 (*taforesses*), 190, and *Diplomatic Edition*, 130 and 175 (*taforesses*), 164. The editor of Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 103–4 suggests an ultimate Greek derivation for the Greek Cypriot *tafourentzes*: Greek μεταφορά

although Makhairas does not specifically say that the army did not know the destination of the expedition, a fact stressed by Philippe, this may be inferred from the context: Peter sent a ship from Rhodes to Cyprus to tell the queen to warn the Cypriots to abandon Arab lands and had the fleet divert to Crambousa first.⁸² Despite the narrative similarities, the two writers present the events from a different perspective and this is best exemplified by the exalted role Philippe attributes to the legate as the crusade's spiritual leader, making a point of specifying that he was on the same ship with Peter Thomas, and by their respective interpretation of the decision to make peace with the Turkish emirs of Ephesus and Miletus before the expedition. For Philippe, the two emirs are the ones who offer tribute, another sign of God's power who thus honored his servant the king; for Makhairas, Peter makes peace with the emirs at the request of the Hospitallers who were afraid of them.⁸³

("transport" and "metaphor") > Venetian *tàfora* ("metaphor") > Old French *taforesse* > Greek Cypriot *ταφουρέ(ν)τζα* or *ταφουρίτζα*; this is, however, a problematic etymology because the Greek *metaphora* is not used in a nautical semantic context and neither is the Venetian word, see Giuseppe Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano* (Venice, 1856²), 730. Arabic is more likely the source language with two possible etymologies, *tayfūriyya* ("little bird") or *tayfūr* ("plate," "basket"), neither used, though, in a nautical context, see Federico Corriente, *Dictionary of Arabic and Allied Loanwords. Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, Galician and Kindred Dialects* (Leiden, 2008), 204; the word then passed to Old French and thence to the Greek Cypriot dialect, see Henry Kahane and Renée Kahane, "El término mediterráneo *tafurae* 'buque para caballos'," in *Estudios dedicados a Menéndez Pidal* (Madrid, 1950), 1: 75–89, who believe that there existed a Catalan intermediary form between Arabic and French. Λουσέρην probably derives from *le huissier*, see Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 122, 254 and Emmanuel Kriaras, *Λεξικὸν τῆς μεσαιωνικῆς ἐλληνικῆς δημόδου γραμματείας* [Dictionary of Medieval Greek Vernacular Literature], 15 vols. so far (Thessalonike, 1968–), 9: 229; also see Pryor and Jeffreys, *The Age of the Δρόμων*, 258–59, 311, 417–18. The meaning of these names escaped the Italian translator of the chronicle's Ravenna recension, who gives "gallere sforzate" and "maone" for *tafourontzes*, leaving λουσέρηνα and σατίες in Greek, Strambali, *Chronique*, 49, 82.

⁸² Mézières, *Life*, 128–29; Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§168, 171 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 153. See Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 167.

⁸³ Mézières, *Life*, 128 and 130 (ship), 127, cf. 86 (emirs); Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §166 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 152. Peace with the Turks was favoured by Venice too, see Coureas, "King Peter I of Cyprus and the Rebellion of 1363 on Crete," 524–26. Interestingly, neither author uses the ancient Greek names but "Haltelogo" (perhaps a corrupt form of the Greek name *Ἅγιος Θεολόγος* / "Holy Theologian" or simply a name designating a high place) and *Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης* ("Saint John [the Theologian]" who was buried nearby), instead of Ephesus, and "Palatia" and *Παλατία* ("Palaces"), instead of Miletus; cf. Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 214 ("Hautelogie"). These forms gave the modern Turkish names *Ayasolouk* and *Palatscha*, see discussion in Jorga, *Mézières*, 281 and Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 2: 113–14.

As the eyewitness of an event that constituted the culmination of a lifetime's labors and expectations, in the *Life* Philippe describes the expedition in pure crusader epic style as a campaign for the glory of the name of God with Cypriots, French, Germans, and English all united in their common cause and aspiring to the victory against the enemies of faith that would open the door of Paradise for them; the legate blessed and encouraged the "soldiers of God", asking for God's help for the honor of the cross and the destruction of the Saracens; the king's banner with the Lusignan arms was raised and the soldiers cried "Vivat, vivat Petrus Ierusalem et Cypri rex noster! Contra Saracenos infideles". The same epic style is preserved in the *Songe*, where, however, only passing references are made to the conquest of "the mother of Egypt" or the "Blanche Cerfve" as one of the achievements of the heroic king of Cyprus. In the Rule of the Order of the Passion and in the *Oracio tragédica*, Peter is said to have given the third of the town to Philippe so that he could launch his project for the creation of the Order. In the latter work, though, as well as in his *Contemplacio hore mortis*, he also refers to the looting of Alexandria by the Cypriot army, carefully specifying that the members of his family took absolutely nothing from these unholy spoils ("...de dictis spoliis que in dicta civitate in habundancia possidebat nec ipse nec familia sua... unum iota a civitate non extraxit").⁸⁴ Makhairas' account is very brief (only three paragraphs in R. M. Dawkins' edition as opposed, for example, to roughly thirty or more dedicated to Peter's love affairs) and is given in a matter-of-fact way, even though the awareness that this is a Christian army fighting the infidel is expressed with phrases such as "God showed grace to the Christians" or "by the grace of God they took Alexandria." The presence and role in the events of Mézières is entirely effaced while the

⁸⁴ Mézières, *Life*, 125–41; idem, *Songe*, 1: 280, 295, 297–98, 2: 227, 419, 436, chap. 32, 39, 231, 281, 284; idem, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 17r, 52r–53r, 72r–73r (Alexandria), 89r (the spoils should be distributed fairly amongst the members of the Order), quoted in Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," Part I: 50, notes 1–2, Part II: 10, 15, 16–17 and Jorga, *Mézières*, 299–300; Mézières, *Oracio tragédica*, fols. 191v–195v (194r for Philippe taking one third of the town, 195v for the spoils); idem, *Contemplacio hore mortis*, fols. 218v–219r, quoted in Jorga, *Mézières*, 246, note 6, 300, note 4, 304, note 4; Mézières, *Nova religio milicie Passionis*, in Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits," 353 (Alexandria); Mézières, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 54 (Alexandria); the events are also mentioned in Philippe's 1381 letter to his nephew, see Gazier, "Un manuscrit inédit," 105 and Jorga, "L'épître", 33, and in the inscription on his tombstone, see idem, *Mézières*, 511, note 5. For his family in Alexandria, see above note 8.

legate is duly attributed his religious part, presented to give prayers of thanks to God and say mass in memory of those who had been killed. Ample emphasis is put on the way the spoils were divided, the king taking nothing because he would keep the town for himself.⁸⁵ Their respective version of the decision to abandon Alexandria right after its capture epitomizes their different outlook. According to Philippe, the scandalous decision of the council of war ("scandalo fidei Catholicae"), that included the admiral of the Hospitallers, the admiral of Cyprus John of Sur and even the king's brothers, John and James, was not approved either by the legate or the king, who implored his allies to stay but then had to give in, the faithful chancellor in tears offering to keep the town himself with a small force of men; on the way back to Cyprus they were met with a storm, a punishment from God, and those responsible for abandoning Alexandria received divine retribution. For Leontios, the legate, the king, and his knights were all of the same opinion (ὅλοι ἀντάμα μίαν βουλὴν ἀποίκασιν) to abandon the town because "there was no advantage / profit / benefit", the Greek word διάφορος allowing for all three possible interpretations.⁸⁶

From Peter Thomas' death in January 1366 until King Peter's murder in January 1369 very little information can be found in Mézières' works on the latter's reign. Most of the information concerning the king's efforts in Europe to secure support for a new expedition is provided in a speech his chancellor delivered before the Venetian Senate and the Doge Marco Cornaro, probably in the summer of 1366. Philippe informs the Republic that the king consents to enter negotiations with the sultan, urges the Venetians to continue to offer their good services as intermediaries, and promises that no attacks on the sultan's lands that could harm Venetian trade would be undertaken

⁸⁵ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§160–70 (preparations for the expedition), 171–73 (the expedition, 171 for the quotations), 130, 233–49, 251–59, and 280–81 (love affairs) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 149–53 (preparations for the expedition), 153–55 (the expedition, 154 for the quotations), 132, 191–99, 200–205, and 220–22 (love affairs). See generally Nicolaou-Konnari, "The Crusader Ideology."

⁸⁶ Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 72r–73r, quoted in Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," Part II: 16–17; Mézières, *Contemplacio hore mortis*, fols. 218v–219r, quoted in Jorga, *Mézières*, 300, note 4, 303, note 5; Mézières, *Life*, 133–35, 137–39; idem, *Oracio tragedica*, fols. 194v–195v; Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §173 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 155. See discussion in Jorga, *Mézières*, 298–304. For the Alexandria campaign, see generally *ibid.*, 277–304, Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 167–68 for the economic implications, and Peter W. Edbury's contribution in the present volume for a comparison of the different accounts.

during the negotiations, the Cypriot fleet ordered to attack Turkish lands in Asia Minor (Candelore or Alaya) instead; but in case he manages to secure the pope's help for a new expedition, the king asks for the Republic's assistance. In the *Songe* and in Philippe's 1381 letter to his nephew John, he also mentions briefly the attacks against the Cilician port of Ayas and the Syrian ports of Tripoli and Tortosa. In a letter dated 25 September 1368, Philippe mentions the departure of Peter and his son from Venice for Cyprus two days before, at the end of the king's second journey to Europe, and expresses his bitter disappointment for the infamous treaty with the Mamluks imposed on Peter by the pope, commenting ironically that this was the pope's wish and his lord the king could not act against it; many years later, in his *Epistre lamentable*, he would advise much caution when negotiating a treaty with the Turks.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, despite the bitter lesson taught by the futile Alexandria expedition, Philippe refuses to acknowledge that political and economic considerations also governed Peter's policy and he is not discouraged by the attitude of Western rulers: in 1367–1368 he writes the first redaction of the Rule of the Order of the Passion and later in his *Oracio tragedica* and the *Letter to Richard II* he claims that the capture of the city demoralized the infidel, blaming the lack of unity and the failure of the princes of the West to respond to the call of the Christians of the East for the loss of the "terre publique de la crestiente".⁸⁸

Makhairas, on the other hand, gives a full account of political events. However, any crusader overtones concerning Peter's subsequent efforts to capitalize on the destruction of Alexandria by further assaults against Syria, Egypt, and the Turkish southern Asia Minor coast, including the failed campaign of January 1367, are lost in the text, which describes the events in terms of a political and economic antagonism between

⁸⁷ For the speech and the letter, see Arsenal, MS 499, fols. 138v–140v, 154v–155r, Jorga, "Une collection de lettres," 45–52, 315, and idem, *Mézières*, 324–27, 340–42, 381–83; for the attacks, see Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 295, 298, 2: 227 (vague reference to many cities), 419, chap. 39, 231, 281 and Jorga, "L'épître", 38; in the inscription on Philippe's tombstone "Tripoly, Layas,... et plusieurs autres citez et chasteaux" are also mentioned, see idem, *Mézières*, 511, note 5; Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fols. 52r–53r, quoted in Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," Part II: 15; Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 172–76; idem, *Nova religio milicie Passionis* in Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits," 353; Mézières, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 54.

⁸⁸ For the Rule, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 347–52; Mézières, *Oracio tragedica*, fol. 195r; idem, *Letter to King Richard II*, 99–100.

the interests of the Cypriots, on the one hand, and of Venetian and other Western merchants, on the other.⁸⁹ Makhairas also comments ironically that during Peter's second trip to Europe in 1367–1368 “favors were shown and promises were made to the king of Cyprus by the rulers of the West who agreed to accompany him with a great host to destroy the sultan,” Peter said to have visited Rhodes, Naples, Rome, Florence, Milan, and the German emperor who was in Italy; but the pope, who could not support the venture because of domestic problems with the duke of Milan and the pressure exercised by Venice and Genoa, “asked the king... to make peace with the sultan because of the necessities of the Christians” and, despite the initial enthusiasm, the promises never materialized.⁹⁰ In this respect, it is important to note that the long description of the negotiations for peace between the Cypriots and the Mamluks, that lasted from 1365 to 1370, occupies approximately 62 paragraphs. Based on archival sources, Makhairas provides a thorough, detailed, and perceptive evaluation of the events: the pope and the Western rulers were deterred from supporting Peter by the Venetians, Genoese, and Catalans, whose trade was threatened, and the Cypriot king was advised by the pope and the Venetians to conclude peace; the king acknowledged that it was better to have the Venetians as allies than profit from more pillaging (“a friend in the path is better than wealth in life”), and as a gesture of good will he diverted his fleet from a projected assault on Beirut, cynically ordering his captain to ravage Turkish lands (Alaya) instead; with the Venetians acting as intermediaries and manipulators and the pope as counselor to the king, peace was concluded in 1370 under the reign of Peter II.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§180 (Alaya in 1366), 190–91 (failed expedition of 1367, sack of Tripoli), 210–12 (raids in 1367 against Tripoli, Tortosa, Valania, Latakia, Cilician ports of Malo and Ayas), 213 (Peter allows privateering against the Mamluks), 219–22 (privateering in 1367 and 1368), 176–80, 188–89, 197, etc. (economic antagonism) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 158–59 (1366), 164–66 (1367 expedition), 177–79 (1367 raids), 179 (Peter allows privateering), 183–85 (privateering in 1367 and 1368), 157–58, 163–64, 170, etc. (economic antagonism). See generally Jorga, *Mézières*, 353–55, 357–60, 364–69 and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 168–70, 197.

⁹⁰ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§216–18 (217–18 for the quotations), 223, 244 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 181–83 (182 for the quotations), 185, 197. For Peter's second journey to Europe, see documents in Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 291–331 and discussion in Jorga, *Mézières*, 369–83, Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 2: 355–59, and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 170.

⁹¹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§175–86 (178 for the quotation), 187–89, 192–93, 196–98, 202–205, 217–18, 223–30, 284, 290–309 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 156–62 (157–58 for the quotation), 163–64, 166–67, 169–70, 172–75, 182–83, 185–91, 224,

Although Peter's policy of commercial protectionism and his crusading motives are not presented as necessarily mutually exclusive, the chronicle does imply that the king must have known that Alexandria was untenable without help from the West, but used aggression to destroy Famagusta's rival and obtain commercial privileges for the Cypriot merchants from the sultan.⁹²

The use of language and style conforms to the different way the two writers view Peter's wars. Philippe employs conventional crusading rhetoric and vocabulary: the expressions "sanctum passagium"/"saint passage d'outremer," "crucis mysterium," or "bellum Dei" are used for Peter's Alexandria expedition and the "milites Dei electi" of this Christian army ("exercitus Dei" or "exercitus Christianorum") are the "chevaliers de Dieu," the "chevaliers de la croix," or the "pelerins" who fought for the glory and triumph of God's name.⁹³ Jerusalem becomes the symbol of transnational Christian peace and community,

227–38. See Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 291–302 and 302–308, 347–50 for the 1367 draft treaty and other relevant documents and generally Jorga, *Mézières*, 355–57, 360–64, 383–85.

⁹² For a full analysis of Makhairas' treatment of the events, see Nicolaou-Konnari, "The Crusader Ideology." For a discussion about Peter's motives, see Peter W. Edbury, "The Crusading Policy of King Peter I of Cyprus, 1359–1369," in *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades*, ed. P. M. Holt (Warminster, 1977), 90–105, idem, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 171, 177–79, Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580. From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992), 41–43, and Antony Leopold, *How to Recover the Holy Land. The Crusade Proposals of the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Aldershot – Burlington, 2000), 191–92.

⁹³ See indicatively: Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fol. 16v ("saint passage"), quoted in Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion", Part I: 49, note 2; Mézières, *Life*, pp. 103–106, 118–22, 124, 126, and 141 ("sanctum passagium et crucis mysterium"), 106, 124–25, 127, and 131 ("bellum Dei"), 131 and 135 ("milites Dei electi"), 126 ("peregrinis"), 127–28 ("exercitus Dei"), 97, 106, 125–28, 131, and 141 (wars for the glory of God); idem, *Nova religio milicie Passionis*, in Molinier, "Description de deux manuscrits", 353 ("in justo et pio bello Dei"); Mézières, *Songe*, 2: 428–31 ("saint passage d'outremer"), 2: 434 ("bataille de Dieu"), 1: 295 ("chevaliers de Dieu"), 1: 297 ("chevaliers de la croix"), 1: 295, 2: 410 ("pelerins"), 2: 410 ("Terre Sainte"), chap. 282–84, 284, 39, 278; idem, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 54 ("sainte bataille de Dieu"). Also see the following examples which do not refer specifically to Peter's wars: idem, *Epistre lamentable*, 114 and 211 ("saint passage"), 115, 140–41, and 211 ("Terre sainte"), 190 ("Terre de promission"), 134 and 145 ("combatants crestiens"), 191 and 210 ("chevaliers crestiens"), 210 ("pelerins"), 185 ("bataille de Dieu"); idem, *Letter to King Richard II*, 97 and 103–104 ("saint passage d'outre mer"), 103 ("champions de la foy"); idem, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage*, 280, 395, 397 ("saint passage d'outremer", "Terre sainte"); idem, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 43 ("saint passage"), 49 ("terre d'outre mer"), 50 ("ost de Crucifix"), 51 ("saint passage d'outre mer", "Chevalerie du Crucifix"), 55 ("Sainte Terre de Promission").

its recovery necessitating personal and political reform.⁹⁴ On the contrary, the use of crusading vocabulary is very limited in Makhairas' chronicle and there are no words or expressions that could correspond to the terms employed by Mézières. For Peter's expeditions against the Muslims the word μάχη (literally "battle" or "war") is used twice in relation to the capture of Alexandria, a common word that does not convey any crusader meaning, as well as terms which roughly mean "passage" and, thus, may have been drawn upon crusader literature: for ταξείδιον (literally "journey"), describing Peter's plans for a crusade, and ἄμε (literally "going"), used for the expedition against Alexandria, the crusading connotation is not evident in Greek; but the use of πασάντζιν on one occasion with regards to Peter's efforts for a new crusade after the Alexandria events constitutes a direct transliteration of *passagium*, a word which clearly belongs to the crusading lexicon. Most importantly, the chronicle does not use a collective name to describe the participants of such an expedition. The word πηλιγρίνοι (and its derivative πηλιγρίνικα), an obvious Latin loanword employed only once for events in 1426, clearly means "pilgrims" in the original sense of the word.⁹⁵ Stylistically, though, a number of expressions and images that may be considered to pertain to the crusading rhetoric are occasionally employed: for example, the Christians' victories against "the enemies of God" are often attributed to divine intervention.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ See indicatively: Mézières, *Life*, 127 ("sanctam civitatem Ierusalem"), 135 ("Ierusalem matrem nostram"); idem, *Songe*, 2: 410 ("sainte cite de Hierusalem"), chap. 278; idem, *Letter to King Richard II*, 99 ("la maistre cite du royaume general des crestiens, ... Jherusalem", "terre pubique de la crestiente"), 101 ("Jherusalem vostre esperituel royaume"); idem, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage*, 395 ("sainte cité de Jherusalem"); idem, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 43 ("sainte cite de Jherusalem"). On Jerusalem's symbolic value in Mézières' work, see Suzanne M. Jaeger, *Jerusalem in Medieval Narrative* (Cambridge – New York, 2008).

⁹⁵ See Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§159 and 307 (μάχη), 153 (ταξείδιον), 169 (ἄμε), 217 (πασάντζιν), 688 and 691 (pilgrims) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 148 and 236–37 (μάχη), 144 (ταξείδιον), 153 (ἄμε), 182 (πασάντζιν), 453–54 (pilgrims).

⁹⁶ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§114, 121, 126, 133, 195, and 317 (Asia Minor expeditions and raids), 171–72 (Alexandria), 180, 212, and 219 (Cypriot raids against Muslims), 221 (Muslim raid against Cyprus) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 124, 127, 130, 133, 169, and 243 (Asia Minor), 154 (Alexandria), 159, 179, and 183 (Cypriot raids), 184 (raid against Cyprus). For issues concerning self-perception and the perception of the *Other* as well as religious antagonism between Greeks and Latins in the two writers' works, see Nicolaou-Konnari, "Alterity and Identity in the Works of Philippe de Mézières and Leontios Makhairas" (forthcoming).

PETER I OF LUSIGNAN: THE MAN

The way Philippe and Leontios present Peter's private life corresponds in the main to the way they construct his public image as a king and a crusader and accords with their authorial intentions. Peter's non-chivalric side is entirely absent from Philippe's writings. The few instances where he reveals a more human side to the king's character are again related to the crusader cause: they concern Peter's despair for having failed to secure the aid of the princes of the West for his crusade and the consolation offered by Peter Thomas in Venice in late 1364 and the king's deep sorrow when in tears he implored his allies not to abandon Alexandria. A rare exception is a passage in the *Oracio tragedica* where Philippe calls Peter a "young oriental prince, energetic, magnanimous, and elegant of his person." He also reveals Peter's intellectual side, providing the interesting piece of information that he borrowed books from the king's *studium*.⁹⁷ Makhairas' colorful portrait, on the other hand, allows us to gain insight into the complexities and weaknesses of Peter's character and take an indiscreet look into his private life; the king is even mentioned twice, in 1367 and 1368, to have fallen ill. Peter is depicted as an attractive personality and a restless spirit, able to inspire both loyalty and hatred. He appears to have indulged in recreations such as jousting, hunting, and banqueting or in fighting duels and to have enjoyed receiving expensive presents.⁹⁸ These are excesses in a king's entertainment generally condemned by Philippe when he speaks of kingship in the *Songe*, preaching temperance in all things and avoidance of extravagance, or when he praises the fair administration of the royal estate by Peter's great uncle, Henry II of Lusignan (1285–1324).⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Mézières, *Life*, 120–21, 133–34; idem, *Oracio tragedica*, fol. 191r; Jorga, "Le testament," 121, 131.

⁹⁸ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§209 and 229 (sickness), 92 and 94 (banquet and presents offered by Lakha in Famagusta), 131 (received by the Venetians and the pope in 1362), 204 (hunting in Rhodes in June 1367), 216 (received by Joanna of Naples, banquet offered by the pope, and duel with Lesparre in 1367–1368), 217 (received with great honour by the emperor and the duke of Milan, who entertained him and gave him fine presents), 261 (hunting in Cyprus) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 176–77 and 189 (sickness), 113–14 (Lakha), 132 (Venetians and the pope), 175 (Rhodes), 181 (Joanna, the pope, and Lesparre), 182 (the emperor and the duke of Milan), 206 (hunting). See Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 2: 325–27, 355–56 with many examples.

⁹⁹ Mézières, *Songe*, 2: 204–12 (temperance), 212–14 (hunting, jousting), 238–44 (avoidance of extravagance and precious gifts), 278–81 (restrictions for trial by combat),

Makhairas also portrays Peter as a man out of measure, whose behavior is often arbitrary and extreme and who does not possess the moderation advised by Philippe.¹⁰⁰ He is said to have loved and spoiled his son excessively and to have been passionately in love with his wife, to the extent that he always slept with her shift when he was away from her, a story mentioned four times in the text! The chronicler makes a point of reminding his reader of the shift on the occasion of Peter's 1367 visit to Queen Joanna of Naples (1324/6–1382), who "received him with heartfelt kindness and there he stayed for many days," a reassurance of the king's attachment to his wife that renders the nature of the visit dubious. In this respect, it is perhaps significant that Philippe does not mention Peter's visit; however, the chancellor worked in his youth for King Andrew of Hungary (1327–1345), Joanna's first husband, he mentions Peter Thomas visiting her as a papal envoy in 1353 in the *Life*, he speaks extensively of the Kingdom of Naples in the *Songe*, and he associates the murders of Peter and Andrew (both committed by their closest relatives and barons) in his 1381 letter to his nephew John and in the *Epistre lamentable*.¹⁰¹ His love for the queen did not prevent the king from having two mistresses, Joanna L'Aleman and Eschiva de Scandelion; he left Joanna pregnant before his second trip to the West in 1367–1368, the chronicle providing a long and colorful description of Queen Eleanor's attempts to induce a miscarriage.¹⁰² These marital indiscretions are justified in a half-approving, gendered way by our chronicler, who blames "the demon of fornication"

71–75 and 378–79 (abstinence from every recreation before war), chap. 224–26, 234, 244, 272; idem, *Epistre lamentable*, 179–83 (Henry II).

¹⁰⁰ Makhairas' description conforms to what the editors of Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, Introduction, 19 call "une vraie caricature de chevalier."

¹⁰¹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§262–64 (son), 130, 216, and 242–43 (shift) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 206–209 (son), 132, 181, and 195–96 (shift). Mézières, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fol. 17v, quoted in idem, *Songe*, Introduction, 1: 4, note 3, idem, *Life*, 64 and Appendix I, 192–93, idem, *Le Livre de la Vertu du Sacrement de Mariage*, 236–37, idem, *Songe*, 1: 260–63, chap. 24, Gazier, "Un manuscrit inédit," 107 and Jorga, "L'épître," 3, and Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 102; see Jorga, Mézières, 66–67. For Joanna, see Émile G. Léonard, *Histoire de Jeanne I^{re}, reine de Naples, comtesse de Provence (1343–1382)* (Monaco – Paris, 1932–1937).

¹⁰² For Peter's love affairs, see Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§130, 216, 233–38, 251–59 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 132, 181, 191–94. Peter's affair with Joanna and the brutal treatment she received in the queen's hands may have inspired the Greek popular song of *Arodaphnoussa*, see Michalis Pieris, "Λογοτεχνία και λογοτεχνικότητα κατά το πέρασμα της Κύπρου από τον Μεσαίωνα στην Αναγέννηση," [Literature and Literality in Cyprus in the Passage from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance], in 'La Serenissima' and 'La Nobilissima,' 120–27 and notes 4–19 at 137–39 with all the older bibliography.

(ὁ δαίμων τῆς πορνείας) and the king's young age and vigor (ἦτον παιδίος ἄνθρωπος) and "great sensuality" (λουξουρία).¹⁰³ The Greek word *λουξουρία* is obviously a loan from the French *luxure*¹⁰⁴ and it is once more interesting to note that in the *Songe* and other works Philippe wants the allegorical figure of Luxury (one of the seven deadly sins) to be one of the main vices of mankind, urging the king of France to show moderation in his conjugal relations and practice chastity before war; the members of his Order of the Passion were also to observe a vow of conjugal fidelity.¹⁰⁵ Interestingly, in her first revelation about Cyprus, which she received in Famagusta, in the presence of Queen Eleanor, King Peter II, and Prince John of Antioch, during her first visit to the island on her way to Jerusalem in April 1372, St. Bridget of Sweden (1303–1374) asked the people of the city to denounce the sin of luxury ("luxurie") and return to the ways of the Lord.¹⁰⁶ The chronicle also reports rumors about the queen having a lover, a humiliating

¹⁰³ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§234 ("Even as you know that the demon of fornication assails the whole world, so he bequiled the king, and the good king fell into sin with a noble lady"), 242 ("And if any one say, 'Seeing that he had such love for her [the queen], how was it that he had two mistresses?' This he did on account of his great sensuality, because he was a young man") and *Diplomatic Edition*, 191, 196.

¹⁰⁴ The word is not attested in other medieval Greek texts, see Kriaras, *Dictionary*, 9: 228; both Kriaras and Kyriakos P. Chatziioannou, *Περὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ μεσαιωνικῇ καὶ νεωτέρᾳ κυπριακῇ ξένων γλωσσικῶν στοιχείων* [Foreign Lexicon in the Medieval and Modern Cypriot Dialect], *Texte und Forschungen zur Byzantinisch-Neugriechischen Philologie*, Zwanglose Beihefte zu den *Byzantinisch-Neugriechischen Jahrbüchern*, 18 (Athens, 1936), 18, 84 consider the word to be an Occitan loanword but Old French *luxure* is attested since ca. 1120 so a French or perhaps Latin derivation through ecclesiastical channels seems more plausible. The noun *λ(ε)ίξουρία* (greed, avidity) and the adjective *λ(ε)ίξουρος* (greedy) are attested in the *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*, ed. and Italian transl. Giuseppe Schirò (Rome, 1975), 428, line 2807, 306, line 1180 and other texts, but the derivation is different, see Kriaras, *Dictionary*, 9: 187–89; *λίξης* (greedy) also survives in the contemporary Greek Cypriot dialect, see Kyriakos P. Chatziioannou, *Ετυμολογικὸ λεξικὸ τῆς ὁμιλουμένης κυπριακῆς διαλέκτου. Ἱστορία, ἐρμηνεία καὶ φωνητικὴ τῶν λέξεων μετὰ τοπωνυμικὸ παράρτημα* [Etymological Dictionary of the Contemporary Cypriot Dialect] (Nicosia, 1996), 102, who erroneously thinks it derives from *luxuria*.

¹⁰⁵ Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 308–309, 313–14, 316, 336–52, 387–88, and 392 (luxury), 2: 240 (Alexander the Great was a notorious example of sensuality), 206 and 383 (marital relations), chap. 44, 47, 48, 52–56, 74, 234, 224, 272; idem, *Epistre lamentable*, 105–108, 110, 121, 139, 147, and passim; idem, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fol. 82v; idem, *Nova religio milicie Passionis*, fols. 8v–9r (fidelity), 16r ("luxuria"), quoted in Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," Part I: 47, notes 1–2; Mézières, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 44–47 (luxury), 47 and 58 (fidelity); cf. Williamson, "The Chevalerie de la Passion Jhesu Christ", 167–68.

¹⁰⁶ *Revelationes Sanctae Birgittae, Revelaciones Lib. VII*, ed. B. Bergh (Uppsala, 1967), 169–82, chap. 16–19.

and demeaning affair for the king (“the matter is very heavy and hard to endure, and shameful and unseemly”) that had a destructive effect on his behavior.¹⁰⁷ The image used to describe the queen’s infidelity in a letter cited in the text (νὰ ζουρώσω τὴν καρδιάν σου νὰ σοῦ ξηγηθῶ τὰ μαντάτα...ἐπλάνεσεν τὴν ἀρνίαν σου καὶ εὐρέθην μὲ τὸν κλιάρον / “I must soil your heart by telling you the news... your ewe has gone astray and been with the ram”) is strikingly similar to that used by Iago to Brabantio in William Shakespeare’s *Othello* more than 150 years later (“Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul / Even now, now, very now, an old black ram / Is tupping your white ewe”).¹⁰⁸ Philippe, on the other hand, praises the queen in the discourse he pronounced to celebrate the coronation of Pope Gregory XI in 1372, but this was of course an official text.¹⁰⁹

Mézières was in Venice when Peter was murdered on 17 January 1369. He had left Cyprus in June 1366 but he must have known of Peter’s notorious conduct that had drawn the attention of Pope Urban V in 1367 and led to his murder.¹¹⁰ However, his obvious intention not to blemish the picture of the perfect crusader means that he chooses to omit these deplorable events and to present his king and close friend as a martyr. The fact that only three days after the king’s murder his loyal chancellor chooses to write in his own hand his testament in Venice, meditating on the fragility and vanity of human life, even though he most probably did not know yet of Peter’s death, is perhaps indicative

¹⁰⁷ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§239–43, 245, 249, 251–59 (251 for the quotation) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 194–99, 200–205 (201 for the quotation).

¹⁰⁸ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §241 and *Diplomatic Edition*, 195 (only in V87v–88r, O120v and R67r use the metaphor “the Count of Roukha has stretched out his hand to your dish”). Leontios uses the testimony of witnesses as well as letters for his account of the royal love affairs and one wonders if he actually saw these compromising letters, Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§238 and 249 (witnesses), 236, 240–41, 243, 253, 255, 256, and 257 (letters) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 194 and 198–99 (witnesses), 193, 195, 196, 201, and 202–204 (letters), see Nicolaou-Konnari, “Diplomatics and Historiography,” 301, 303, 304. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. Kenneth Muir (London, 1968), I: 1, 54, lines 88–90. Cf. Joanna Montgomery Byles, “Shakespeare and the Cyprus Setting,” in *Chypre hier et aujourd’hui entre Orient et Occident. Échanges et relations en Méditerranée orientale*, Actes du Colloque tenu à Nicosie, 1994, Université de Chypre et Université Lumière-Lyon 2, ed. Françoise Métral, Marguerite Yon, and Yannis Ioannou (Lyon, 1996), 155–60.

¹⁰⁹ Mézières, *Collacio de leticia creacionis et coronacionis Gregorii pape undecimi*, see Jorga, “Une collection de lettres,” 53.

¹¹⁰ Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 343 erroneously says that Philippe was in Nicosia at the time of the murder. For the pope, see Jorga, *Mézières*, 385, Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 2: 361, and Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 174.

of the special bond between the two men.¹¹¹ Consequently, Philippe often laments Peter's pitiful death with the use of biblical metaphors, comparing the Kingdom of Cyprus to Aceldama ("Acheldemach"), the "Field of Blood" near Jerusalem purchased with the bribe Judas took for betraying Jesus.¹¹² He does not, however, describe in detail the actual events of the murder, simply saying in the *Songe* that he was treacherously killed in his bed while sleeping and not in battle against the enemies of faith, as it would have been worthy of him, and specifying in the *Oracio tragedica* that one of the meetings of the conspirators took place in Raymond Babin's house. Nevertheless, he does not hesitate to accuse the king's two brothers of complicity in the regicide with his barons, something that was generally accepted in the West: Peter was "occis... par ses propres freres et barons, desquelx il se fioit comme de lui mesmes" and his "piteux sang humain" is still dripping from the fingers of the man who now rules Cyprus, his brother James I (1382–1398). In the main he offers no explanation about the murderers' motives, with the exception of a passage in the *Oracio tragedica* where he clearly explains that the Cypriot barons considered Peter's wars to have a harmful effect on their interests and were envious of the favors shown by the king to the foreigners in his service; in the *Songe*, he also claims that he had frequently warned Peter of the danger of not providing guards for his own person.¹¹³ He had,

¹¹¹ Jorga, "Le testament," 119, 124; the fact that Philippe does not mention the king's death argues against considering the date of the testament (20 January 1369) to correspond to the year 1370, provided we assume that the chancellor used the Lusignan and Venetian (*more Veneto*) practice, according to which the beginning of the year was the first of March, see Nicolaou-Konnari, "Diplomatics and Historiography," 310. Cf. Philippe's 1381 letter to his nephew, Gazier, "Un manuscrit inédit," 107 and Jorga, "L'épître," 38.

¹¹² Mézières, *Songe*, 1: 109, 257, 258, 259, 295, and 300 ("Acheldemach" or "Echeldemach"), Table figurée and chap. 23, 39, 40; also used in idem, *Sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion*, 44, but not for Peter. For Aceldama, see Matth. 27: 7–10 and Acts 1: 18–20; the image of "C(h)audemar" is also used in the Latin Eastern text *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier*, ed. Louis de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1871), 203.

¹¹³ Mézières, *Campaign*, "Letter," 43–44; idem, *Chevalerie de la Passion*, fol. 73v, quoted in Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," Part II: 17; Mézières, *Epistre Lamentable*, 102; idem, *Oracio tragedica*, fols. 196v (murder motives), 197v (Babin's house); idem, *Songe*, 1: 259–60, 295–96, and 299 (murder, 259, 299 for the quotations), 2: 220 (guards), chap. 23, 39, 40, 228; Gazier, "Un manuscrit inédit," 107 and Jorga, "L'épître," 38–9. For Babin, see Weyprecht-Hugo Rüdte de Colenberg, "Études de prosopographie généalogique des Chypriotes mentionnés dans les Registres du Vatican 1378–1471," *Μελέται καὶ Ὑπομνήματα* [Studies and Memoranda] 1 (Nicosia, 1984), 565–68; he is also mentioned by Leontios, see Makhairas, *Chronicle*, Index, 2: 279.

however, maintained friendly relations with Peter's brother Prince John of Antioch in the past and, in his capacity as the kingdom's envoy, he would praise him as the kingdom's regent in the 1372 speech before Pope Gregory XI.¹¹⁴

Leontios was too young or unborn when Peter was murdered but stories must have circulated on the island long after the events. He builds up the drama adroitly, providing details that endow his account with verisimilitude and describing in a climactic way the king's moral degradation and abuse of power; these are acts violently condemned by Philippe in the *Epistre lamentable* when he describes the perfect knight who abides by moral values and serves justice and in the *Songe* when they are committed by the Lombard tyrants or when he admonishes the king of France not to encroach on the liberties of his subjects.¹¹⁵ Falsely advised by his barons not to punish the queen and her lover, Peter was "full of ill will and anger," violated the law and customs of the kingdom, and dishonored noble women, thus alienating the feudal nobility. "The devil" is said to have been "the father" of these troubles, but in fact the text considers the king's disintegrating family life to be responsible for his irrational behavior that allowed hatred to "find room and sow its seed" and "the tree of hatred to grow."¹¹⁶ This is highlighted by the final act of the drama, set in the king's bedroom, who is found in an undignified situation naked in bed with his mistress (γυμνὸς μὲ τὸ ἀποκάμισον), and climaxing with James de Nores symbolically mutilating the decapitated, without breeches body (ἀναβράκωτον καὶ κομμοκέφαλον) with the words "these cost you your life" (διὰ τοῦτα ἔδωκες θάνατον).¹¹⁷ Only on one occasion does the text allude to the king's disappointment of the failure of his crusading plans as another possible reason for his conduct, when he

¹¹⁴ Jorga, "Le testament," 120, 125, 127; Mézières, *Collacio de leticia creacionis et coronacionis Gregorii pape undecimi*, see Jorga, "Une collection de lettres," 53–54.

¹¹⁵ Mézières, *Epistre lamentable*, 129–33 and passim; idem, *Songe*, 1: 278–83, 2: 385–400, chap. 31–33, 273–74.

¹¹⁶ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§ 259–79 (259, 268, 271 for the quotations) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 205–20 (205, 210–11, 212 for the quotations).

¹¹⁷ The illustration of the murder in the Book of Hours of Louis of Savoy, who married Anna of Lusignan (Peter's great niece) in 1434, is not very flattering either, presenting the king in a vulnerable position, attacked by his barons while he is naked in bed, and with a frightened look, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS lat. 9473, fol. 64v, see reproduction in *Chypre. D'Aphrodite à Mélusine*, ed. Matteo Campagnolo, Chantal Courtois, Marielle Martiniani-Reber, and Lefki Michaelidou (Geneva, 2006), 131, ill. XLIII.

is said to have behaved “arrogantly” (ἔσουπερπιάστην) ever since he returned from his second journey to the West.¹¹⁸ Makhairas skillfully avoids to accuse openly Peter’s brothers of participating in the murder even though his very account allows the reader to form a different view: he places them in every step of the conspiracy, including the scene of the murder, gives as one of the places where the conspirators conferred the house of Prince John of Antioch, Peter’s brother, emphasizes the pressure exercised upon them by the noblemen and the way the latter manipulated their ambitions, says that the king did not trust either his brothers or his knights and wanted to shut them up in prison, and presents Queen Eleanor holding Prince John personally responsible.¹¹⁹ The fact that at the time Makhairas wrote his work the island was ruled by the son of Peter’s brother James I, Janus, in whose service the chronicler was, may explain his careful version of the events, which, apparently, could not diverge significantly from the ‘official’ account.¹²⁰

Peter’s murder inevitably raises the question of which writer’s account of his reign is nearer the historical truth. There is no easy way to answer this question. To a larger or lesser extent, both writers construct the picture of Peter’s reign that corresponds to their own ideological and political reality. Mézières writes in order to propagate his crusader ideals but also out of the need to justify a lifetime’s labors and goals. In the closing scene of the *Songe* he expresses feelings of despair and extreme grief at the failure of his hopes for a political, social, and religious reform in the West as a prerequisite for a new crusade. Nevertheless, he fails to adapt his views to the changing Western crusading politics in the face of the Ottoman threat; even

¹¹⁸ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§ 280–81 (murder scene), 272 (arrogance) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 220–22, 213.

¹¹⁹ Makhairas, *Chronicle*, 1: §§269–81 (conspiracy), 274–77 (meeting places: outside a church, a tavern, the prince’s house), 260 (prison), 553–54 (Eleanor) and *Diplomatic Edition*, 211–22 (conspiracy), 214–17 (meeting places), 205–206 (prison), 386–88 (Eleanor).

¹²⁰ For a discussion of the events, the extent of the complicity of the king’s brothers, and Western opinions regarding their complicity, see Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 342–45, Jorga, Mézières, 386–94, Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 2: 363–68, Jean Richard, “La Révolution de 1369 dans le royaume de Chypre,” *Bibliothèque de l’École des chartes* 110 (1952), 108–23, Mézières, *Songe*, Introduction, 1: 63–65, idem, *Epistre lamentable*, Introduction, 26–27, P. W. Edbury, “The Murder of King Peter I of Cyprus (1359–1369),” *Journal of Medieval History* 6 (1980), 219–33, and idem, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 172–77.

in his last work, *L'Epistre lamentable*, written after the disaster of Nicopolis (1396), Philippe refuses to accept that he was defeated by history and clings with pathetic stubbornness to his lifelong dreams of creating the new Order of the Passion that would make possible the expedition to the Holy Land, although he acknowledges an old man's grief at the failures of the past.¹²¹ In other words, as Peter's apologist, Philippe also writes the apology of his own life. His portrayal of Peter's person and reign may thus not be entirely fabricated but it is deliberately one-sided, with meaningful omissions and partial interpretation of historical events, an idealized assessment of the king's works and days. Makhairas' account, on the other hand, is more complete and multifaceted. He also presents Peter as a valiant king fighting the infidel, but he places his wars within their complex political and economic context without hesitating at the same time to reveal unworthy and even brutal aspects of his character. However, both men remain first and foremost loyal to their Lusignan patrons. If Philippe then writes Peter's encomium, Makhairas offers a more balanced evaluation of the king's reign, not criticizing but critically assessing the events.

It is difficult to determine to what extent Philippe's crusader outlook and Makhairas' *kypriotike* perception of history incorporated a social reality (the way the West or the Cypriots perceived the events) or simply reflected their own views and those of their milieu. Even though almost all of his works were written after Peter's death, one may argue that Philippe, as much as he believed in his Dream, used crusading propaganda to promote less idealistic aspects of the king's policy during his travels in Europe; however, if as an image-maker he may have succeeded in influencing certain European courts and literary circles,¹²²

¹²¹ Mézières, *Songe*, 2: 422–69, and *passim*, chap. 282–300; *idem*, *Epistre lamentable*, *passim*; *idem*, *Letter to King Richard II*, *passim*.

¹²² See for example: *Annales ecclesiastici*, ed. C. Baronius and O. Raynaldus, new ed. A. Theiner, 37 vols. (Bar-le-Duc – Paris, 1864–1882), 1363, §§15–19; Pope Urban V, *Lettres secrètes et curiales se rapportant à la France*, ed. P. Lecacheux and G. Mollat, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1902–1955), nos. 476–89; Machaut, *La Prise d'Alixandre* and *The Capture of Alexandria*, English trans. Janet Shirley, introduction and notes Peter W. Edbury (Crusade Texts in Translation 8) (Aldershot, 2001). For a discussion about these and other writers, including Petrarch, Froissart, Christine de Pizan, and Chaucer, see: Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, 2: 245–46, 337, note 2; Jorga, *Mézières* 80–82, 306, 378–79, 392–93, and *passim*; Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 2: 327, note 2 (reference at 328), 335, note 3, 368; Palmer's introduction to Machaut, *La Prise d'Alixandre*, 11–33; Edbury's introduction to Machaut, *The Capture of Alexandria*, 8–16.

as a diplomat he failed to secure their concrete support. On the other hand, Peter's murder clearly indicates that discontentment because of his conduct and the effects of his wars must have existed amongst a section of the Cypriot society and this suggests that Makhairas' version of the events reflected local sentiments, even though he construes historical events with the benefit of hindsight. The comparison of Mézières and Makhairas' works with other contemporary or later sources would complement this study, answering some of the above questions and enhancing our understanding of their politics of historical interpretation. It might also shed some light on many obscure issues concerning the extent to which Makhairas and Mézières had access to the same sources and the debt of Makhairas' text to French historiography as well as the complex relationship between his chronicle and later Cypriot narrative sources.¹²³

¹²³ See Nicolaou-Konnari, "Crusader Ideology," and Peter W. Edbury's contribution in this volume.

WESTERN MERCHANTS, PILGRIMS, AND TRAVELERS IN
ALEXANDRIA IN THE TIME OF PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES
(CA. 1327–1405)

David Jacoby*

Alexandria was of special relevance to Philippe de Mézières. After arriving in Cyprus in 1348, he presumably became aware of the importance of the Egyptian port for the island's prosperity and for Famagusta's role as transit station for Christian pilgrimage. As chancellor of Cyprus from 1361, he must have been duly informed about Alexandria's heterogeneous population, economy, topography and administration, as well as about its defenses and garrison. A trusted advisor to King Peter I of Cyprus, he was clearly involved in the detailed planning of the attack on Alexandria in 1365, in which he personally participated. Not surprisingly, the failure of this military expedition, devised as a first stage in the crusade for the Christian recovery of the Holy Land, was a traumatic experience for him. His major concern in the following period was the organization of another crusade. We may safely assume that the conquest of Alexandria was among the targets he envisaged in that framework.

Alexandria became the major Mediterranean outlet for oriental flavoring agents, aromatics and dyestuffs in the eleventh century.¹ The continuous large western demand for these commodities, collectively defined as spices in the Middle Ages, was also stimulated by the use of many of them in medicine.² In addition, western merchants were keen

* In order to reduce the size of the footnotes I cite whenever possible recent studies where the reader will find references to primary sources and to earlier publications. In a long-time perspective I deal with some issues beyond the chronological limits indicated in the title.

¹ Bernard Lewis, "The Fatimids and the Route to India," *Revue de la Faculté des Sciences Économiques de l'Université d'Istanbul* 11 (1949–1950), 50–54; Jean-Claude Garcin, "Transport des épices et espace égyptien entre le XI^e et le XV^e siècle," in *Les transports au moyen âge = Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest* 85 (1978), 305–309.

² Efraim Lev and Zohar Amar, *Practical Materia Medica of the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean According to the Cairo Genizah* (Leiden – Boston, 2008); Dominique Cardon, *Natural Dyes. Sources, Tradition, Technology and Science* (London, 2007).

to acquire Egyptian alum, a mineral mainly required by the expanding woolen, cotton and silk industries in the West for the fixing of dye-stuffs on textile fibers. Alum was also used in the treatment of hides and in medicine. It represented a substantial portion of the cargo shipped from Egypt to the West from the twelfth century onwards.³ In return, Egypt was eager to obtain timber and pitch for the building and equipment of ships, as well as iron and weapons.⁴ These were the main commodities promoting the first stage of Western trade and presence in Alexandria, to which the export of Egyptian sugar and cotton and the import of slaves for the Mamluk army were added in the course of the thirteenth century.⁵

Until that period, western merchants spent only a short time in Alexandria and generally returned home on board the same ships on which they arrived. At most, they prolonged their stay during the winter months, when trans-Mediterranean navigation was suspended. They resided in compounds providing lodgings for merchants and storage for goods, built around a central courtyard where business transactions took place and taxes were collected. These compounds were called *funduk* in Arabic, *fundus* or *fundicum* in Latin, *fondaco* in Italian dialects, and similar terms in other western languages.⁶ The *funduks* belonged to the sultan and were strictly controlled by his officials.⁷ Residence in them was compulsory for western merchants, and

³ David Jacoby, "Production et commerce de l'alun oriental en Méditerranée, XI^e–XV^e siècles," in Philippe Borgard, Jean-Paul Brun and Maurice Picon, eds., *L'alun de Méditerranée* (Collection du Centre Jean Bérard, 23) (Naples/Aix-en-Provence, 2005), 219–43, 256–60. On the medical use, see Lev and Amar, *Practical Materia Medica*, 99–100.

⁴ David Jacoby, "The Supply of War Materials to Egypt in the Crusader Period," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001), 102–32, repr. in David Jacoby, *Commercial Exchange across the Mediterranean: Byzantium, the Crusader Levant, Egypt and Italy* (Aldershot, 2005), no. II.

⁵ Mohamed Ouerfelli, *Le sucre. Production, commercialisation et usages dans la Méditerranée médiévale* (Leiden – Boston, 2008), 67–102, 429–36; Jong-Kuk Nam, *Le commerce du coton en Méditerranée à la fin du Moyen Age* (Leiden – Boston, 2007), 153–59, 238–43, 287–92, 333–37.

⁶ I use here *funduks* for the plural.

⁷ Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World. Lodging, Trade and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2003), is the most comprehensive study of the institution; on Alexandria, see *ibid.*, esp. 107–26, 266–91, and below my reservations about some of the author's views. See also David Jacoby, "Les Italiens en Égypte aux XII^e et XIII^e siècles: du comptoir à la colonie?" in Michel Balard and Alain Ducellier, eds., *Coloniser au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1995), 76–89, 102–107 (notes); Mohamed Taher Mansouri, "Les communautés marchandes occidentales dans l'espace mamlouk," in Balard and Ducellier, *Coloniser au Moyen Age*,

the authorities determined in which of them they would stay.⁸ Each of the three major Italian maritime nations obtained a *funduk* in the twelfth century, Pisa between 1154 and 1168, Venice presumably in 1172, and Genoa between 1192 and 1200. These compounds remained property of the sultan, under his authority, and under his administration. The sultan's officials were entitled to lodge foreign Latins in the Pisan and Venetian *funduks*.

Western trade with Egypt intensified after 1192, and the number of merchants from the main maritime nations visiting Alexandria increased. Beginning around 1200 economic incentives and the progressive development of a limited internal autonomy induced some merchants to prolong their stay up to several years in the national *funduks*. The growing number of Venetian merchants visiting Alexandria or residing there for an extended period prompted Venice to request a second compound in 1208.⁹ It would seem that the first *funduk* was replaced in 1302 by another one with more amenities.¹⁰ Venice was the only western nation holding two compounds, a large and a small one.¹¹

In the course of the thirteenth century Venice, Genoa and Pisa obtained growing autonomy in their respective national *funduks*. Each

89–101, 107–11 (notes), does not provide material for the investigation that follows. Oueded Sennoune, “Fondouks, khans et wakalas à Alexandrie à travers les récits de voyageurs,” *Annales Islamologiques* 38 (2004), 453–89, ignores recent studies and fails to make any contribution to our knowledge.

⁸ This was not the result of “increasing pressure” by the authorities, as stated by Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 112, but the rule, as illustrated for the Amalfitans residing in the *dar manak* in Cairo in 969: see Jacoby, “Les Italiens en Égypte,” 76–77.

⁹ *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig* (Vienna, 1856–1857), eds. Gottlieb L. Fr. Tafel und Georg M. Thomas, 2: 186, 189: “fondicum (...) quod dicitur Soguediki,” *suq ad-dika* being the poultry market. The two *funduks* of Venice are mentioned in 1238: Tafel und Thomas, *Urkunden*, 2: 338. Venice still held the compound next to the poultry market in 1416, when the Venetian consul rented a store close to its entrance: Subhi Y. Labib, *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter (1171–1517)* (Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Beiheft 46), (Wiesbaden, 1965), 501–502, no. 6, summary of an unpublished document in Arabic.

¹⁰ Grant of a “second” compound with an oven, a cistern of sweet water, and a well of salty water in 1302: Georg M. Thomas—Riccardo Predelli, eds., *Diplomatarium veneto-levantinum*, 2 vols. (Venice, 1880–1899), 1: 8.

¹¹ Jacoby, “Les Italiens en Égypte,” 83, for 1252; Charles Verlinden, “Marchands chrétiens et juifs dans l’Etat mamlouk au début du XV^e siècle d’après un notaire vénitien,” *Bulletin de l’Institut historique belge de Rome* 51 (1981), 52–53, 63, 69, 76–77, for 1420–1422. For a later period, see below.

of the three Italian maritime nations was allowed to appoint its own resident consul, who was recognized by the authorities as the official representative of his nation. Each nation established its own administration, financed by revenue from the rental of lodgings and storage in its *funduk* to merchants, pilgrims and travelers, the lease of the establishment's oven and tavern, and internal taxation, as on wine consumption. In addition, the consuls exercised judicial authority and control over the members of their respective national community.¹² The consuls of Pisa and Venice were empowered from 1215 and 1254 respectively to limit residence in the *funduk* they administered to their own nationals. Marseilles too obtained a *funduk* administered by a consul in Alexandria, mentioned in its municipal statutes of 1253.¹³ Since these also reflect earlier legislation, it is impossible to determine the date at which the first consul was appointed. A Catalan *funduk* was apparently established in 1262, although it is not mentioned until 1323 and its inner structure is first described in 1381. It accommodated the merchants of Barcelona, Montpellier and other cities under Aragonese rule. The municipal council of Barcelona appointed the resident consul, who is first attested in 1268.¹⁴ The internal autonomy granted to the *funduks* of the western nations was not tantamount to extraterritorial status, since these compounds remained property of the sultan and subject to his supreme authority.¹⁵ This is strikingly illustrated by the residential segregation imposed upon the Latins, reinforced by limitations upon their movement in the city. At night and during the

¹² Jacoby, "Les Italiens en Égypte," 82–88. Judicial authority is also well illustrated by the instructions to the Venetian consul: David Jacoby, "Le consulat vénitien d'Alexandrie d'après un document inédit de 1284," in Damien Coulon, Catherine Otten-Froux, Paule Pagès and Dominique Valérian, eds., *Chemins d'outre-mer. Études sur la Méditerranée médiévale offertes à Michel Balard*, 2 vols. (Byzantina Sorbonensia, 20) (Paris, 2004), 2: 461–74. On the authority of the Catalan consuls, see Damien Coulon, *Barcelone et le grand commerce d'Orient au moyen âge* (Bibliothèque de la Casa de Velázquez, 27) (Madrid – Barcelone, 2004), 65–72.

¹³ Régine Pernoud, ed., *Les statuts municipaux de Marseille* (Monaco – Paris, 1949), 29, chap. 18.

¹⁴ Eliyahu Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1983), 12–14; Coulon, *Barcelone*, 63–64, 85–86. Details on the compound in 1381: Antonio de Capmany y Montpalau, *Memorias historicas sobre la marina, comercio y artes de la antigua ciudad de Barcelona*, Reedicion anotada, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1962), 2/1: 321, no. 214.

¹⁵ Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 268, 276, states that they were administered by Mamluk officials, yet this was no more the case at that time, not even "partly."

Muslim Friday prayer the Latins were confined to the *funduks*, the gates of which were locked by the Egyptian authorities.¹⁶

It should be noted that the communities of the major maritime powers in Alexandria included, in addition to their citizens, inhabitants of their respective periphery or regions of dominance. Indeed, Genoa extended Genoese nationality to the inhabitants of Liguria, while Venice regarded as Venetians its colonial subjects, such as Cretan Greeks and Jews, following the imposition of Venetian rule over Byzantine territories in the early thirteenth century. While operating in the eastern Mediterranean the citizens of Florence, San Gimignano and other Tuscan cities benefited from Pisan status from the second half of the twelfth century onward.¹⁷ Merchants from Majorca, Valencia and Aragon appear in the Catalan community of Alexandria.¹⁸

Genoa and Venice granted naturalization to foreigners in several regions of the eastern Mediterranean, yet abstained from implementing this policy in Egypt for fear of antagonizing the sultans. As a result, their national communities in Alexandria were multilingual, multi-confessional and multi-cultural. The inclusion of citizens, subjects, and naturalized foreigners in the national communities was recognized by the Egyptian authorities. All nationals of a maritime nation enjoyed its privileges and protection and were admitted to its *funduk*.¹⁹ The extension of nationality was also beneficial to the granting nation, since it ensured larger revenues from the use of its facilities and from internal taxation.²⁰ The consuls of the western nations decided whether to

¹⁶ For the last three paragraphs, see Jacoby, "Les Italiens en Égypte," 76–89, 102–107 (notes). For the oven, wine and internal revenue, see *ibid.*, 81, 83–86; for wine, see also Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 138–44, 275–78.

¹⁷ Jacoby, "Les Italiens en Égypte," 87.

¹⁸ We may safely assume that this was already the case from the 1260s, although it is attested only later: Coulon, *Barcelone*, 64, 68–69.

¹⁹ The admission of non-citizens did not involve a personal arrangement, as stated by Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 272. It was an official policy adopted by these powers: see Jacoby, "Les Italiens en Égypte," 87.

²⁰ For the distinction between citizens and other nationals, see David Jacoby, "Citoyens, sujets et protégés de Venise et de Gênes en Chypre du XII^e au XV^e siècle," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 5 (1977), 159–88, repr. in David Jacoby *Recherches sur la Méditerranée orientale du XII^e au XV^e siècle. Peuples, sociétés, économies* (London, 1979), no. VI; David Jacoby, "Les Vénitiens naturalisés dans l'Empire byzantin: un aspect de l'expansion de Venise en Roumanie du XIII^e au milieu du XV^e siècle," *Travaux et Mémoires* 8 (1981) (= *Hommage à M. Paul Lemerle*), 217–35, repr. in David Jacoby, *Studies on the Crusader States and on Venetian Expansion* (Northampton, 1989), no. IX; David Jacoby, "Les Génois dans l'Empire byzantin: citoyens, sujets et protégés (1261–1453)," *La Storia dei Genovesi* 9 (1989), 245–84, repr. in David Jacoby,

admit to their respective *funduk* western merchants from nations lacking a compound of their own. These merchants presumably resided in compounds administered by the Egyptian authorities if they were not housed in national *funduks*.

The material, legal and institutional features of the western national *funduks* existing in Alexandria in the thirteenth century remained unchanged in the following period. The status of compounds obtained by additional western nations in the fourteenth and fifteenth century were modeled after them. The evidence regarding the existence and operation of Latin *funduks* in Alexandria in these two centuries is sporadic. Chronicles, treaties concluded by the Egyptian sultans with Western nations, and notarial charters generally offer information on individual *funduks*. Some pilgrims and travelers mention several of them, yet their listings are not always complete or reliable. It is nevertheless clear that the number of Western national compounds varied over time. However, neither the grants of premises to additional nations nor the abolition of existing ones can be dated, except for Florence.²¹ As a result, it is impossible to determine how long various national *funduks* were in existence.

The Irish monk Symon Semeonis, who visited Alexandria in 1323, mentions the *funduks* of Genoa, Venice, Marseilles, Catalonia "and others."²² His report confirms the continuous operation of merchants from these cities or regions in Egypt and offers an illustration of the deficient implementation of the papal embargo on trade with Mamluk territories, decreed in 1291 and relaxed only in 1344.²³ On the other hand, the Pisan *funduk*, attested in the twelfth and thirteenth century, is conspicuously missing in the account of Symon Semeonis, although it still existed at the time of his visit. The Pisan judicial compilations

Trade, Commodities and Shipping in the Medieval Mediterranean (Aldershot, 1997), no. III.

²¹ On the Florentine compound, see below.

²² Mario Esposito, ed., *Itinerarium Symonis Semeonis ab Hybernia ad Terram Sanctam* (Scriptores latini Hiberniae, IV (Dublin, 1960), 48, par. 27; dating of his journey: *ibid.*, 6–21.

²³ On western trade with Egypt from 1291 to 1344, see Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 17–63, *passim*. On the relations between the kings of Aragon and the Egyptian sultans and on Catalan trade in particular, see Coulon, *Barcelone*, 43–48, 87–97. On the embargo's deficient implementation, see also David Jacoby, "The Venetians in Byzantine and Lusignan Cyprus: Trade, Settlement, and Politics," in Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, ed., *La Serenissima and la Nobilissima: Venice in Cyprus and Cyprus in Venice* (Nicosia, 2009), 65–67.

of 1305 and 1348 refer to Pisan consuls in connection with the papal embargo on timber and iron sales to Egypt.²⁴ According to various letters written between 1336 and 1348, the Pisan *funduk*, administered by the consul, housed Florentine merchants as in the thirteenth century.²⁵ It is no more recorded subsequently, although Pisan trading continued in Alexandria by 1385, when Nicolò de Vivaldi was sent to Egypt to request the restitution of confiscated goods.²⁶ It is unclear when the Pisan *funduk* ceased to exist, following the decline of Pisan trading in the eastern Mediterranean.

The Egyptian historian an-Nuwayrī, who witnessed the sack of Alexandria by the forces of Peter I of Cyprus in 1365, reports that the Franks set fire to the Venetian dwellings and storehouses and robbed them. They also destroyed the compounds of the Catalans, the Genoese and Marseilles, and devastated the Cypriot *funduk* called al-Mūza.²⁷ Al-Nuwayrī provides the earliest record of this *funduk*. Its existence warrants particular attention in view of Cypriot interests in trade with Egypt, Cypriot intelligence gathering before the attack of Peter I on Alexandria in 1365, and the possible motivation and expectations of the king for launching this attack. These factors are also highly relevant for the attitude of Philippe de Mézières toward the launching of the expedition and his probable involvement in its planning.

The proclaimed aim of the attack launched by King Peter I against Alexandria in 1365 was the recovery of the Holy Land. It has been suggested that the declarations to that effect were merely propaganda designed for consumption in the West and that the crusade was never

²⁴ Francesco Bonaini, ed., *Statuti inediti della città di Pisa dal XII al XIV secolo*, 3 vols. (Florence 1854–1870), 3: 426–427, 578.

²⁵ Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca, ed., *Lettere di mercanti a Pignol Zucchetto (1336–1350)* (Fonti per la storia di Venezia, Sez. IV–Archivi privati) (Venice, 1957), nos. 1–60, passim. Gaddo Bocco is attested as consul in 1347, yet it is unclear in what capacity he was in Alexandria in 1344: *ibid.*, nos. 9, 46. Note the address of “Vannino Fecini da Firenze nel fondeco di Pisa”: *ibid.*, no. 1.

²⁶ Michele Amari, ed., *I diplomi arabi del R. Archivio Fiorentino* (Florence, 1863), 315–16.

²⁷ Summarized by Labib, *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens*, 340. Jo Van Steenberg, “The Alexandrian Crusade (1365) and the Mamluk Sources: reassessment of the *Kitab al-Ilmam* of An-Nuwayrī al-’Iskandarani (d. 1372 AD),” in Krijnie Ciggaar & Herman G.B. Teule, eds., *East and West in the Crusader States. Context—Contacts—Confrontations, III. Acta of the Congress held at Hernen Castle in September 2000* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 125) (Leuven, 2003), 123–37, points to errors in An-Nuwayrī’s account of the attack. The Egyptian author nevertheless offers important evidence regarding trade in Alexandria, corroborated by documentary sources adduced here.

considered a practical proposition. According to this line of argument, the king's true considerations were of economic nature. He witnessed the decline of Famagusta, bypassed by many western merchants and ships following the relaxation of the papal embargo in 1344 and the full resumption of direct western trade with Mamluk territories in the following year.²⁸ Judging by the king's occupation of Antalya, an important transit station on the southern shore of Asia Minor in 1361 and his successful war against Turkish piracy until 1364, his conquest of Alexandria was conceived as a way to ensure Cypriot merchants a leading role as middlemen re-selling oriental goods to Westerners. After the failure of the king's plan, the surviving treaty with Egypt from 1367 points to Peter's foremost aim at the time: obtain from the sultan preferential commercial facilities, tariff reductions, and legal franchises and guarantees for Cypriot merchants trading in his lands, at the expense of the Mamluk regime and of the Cypriots' competitors, the Western merchants.²⁹

This proposition becomes untenable once we take the Cypriot *funduk* into account. Its existence before the sack of Alexandria in 1365 implies that at some earlier date an unidentified sultan had assigned a compound in the city to the Cypriots, allowed the appointment of a Cypriot consul with judicial authority over them, and granted various commercial and fiscal privileges to Cypriot subjects trading in Alexandria. By the fourteenth century, such related concessions to Western nations were the norm. The absence of a document recording such grants to a Cypriot king does not invalidate the argument, since the Egyptian-Cypriot treaty of 1370 is also missing. Considering the Cypriot *funduk* in Alexandria and its implications, we may safely assume that King Peter I did not request new premises and privileges for Cypriot traders in Alexandria in his negotiations with Egypt in 1367 or 1368.³⁰ Rather, he demanded the restoration of the grants they

²⁸ On this decline, see Jacoby, "The Venetians in Byzantine and Lusignan Cyprus," 73.

²⁹ For this proposition, see Peter Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191–1374* (Cambridge, Eng., 1991), 171. In a private conversation Peter Edbury told me that he had relinquished this interpretation. I nevertheless thought that its rejection here is warranted, since some other scholars have also argued that the attack of King Peter I on Alexandria was highly motivated by economic considerations.

³⁰ Two documents of 1368 dealing with these negotiations have been edited by Louis de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1852–1861), 2: 291–308. See especially *ibid.*, 306, par. 17: "de hedificando habitationem Chipriensem vulgariter nuncupatam Han de la Moze in

had enjoyed before 1365.³¹ He may have also wished to extend the earlier concessions to other Mamluk territories, although this would have been rather difficult, if not impossible to obtain after the events of 1365.

The assumption that economic factors prompted the attack on Alexandria may also be dismissed for other reasons. The capital available to Venetian and Genoese merchants for trade in Egypt, whether consisting in goods, in precious metals or in cash, exceeded by far the means Cypriot merchants could muster. As a result, the Italians would have remained dominant among foreign merchants in Alexandria trade and would have continued to convey most of their goods to Western ports without transshipment in Famagusta, as implemented from 1345. It follows that Cypriot rule over Alexandria would not have attracted more trade to the Cypriot city, although it would have yielded substantial revenue for the king's treasury. Finally, it is rather inconceivable that Peter I should have been willing or able to conceal for a long time his inner thoughts about the purpose of the attack on Alexandria from his most trusted councilors, the papal legate Peter de Thomas and Philippe de Mézières, nor is it plausible that he intended to deceive them. This is convincingly suggested by Philippe's attitude toward the king, which remained highly positive after 1365.

In short, Peter I of Cyprus was sincere in his declarations regarding the nature of the expedition he launched against Alexandria. According to the statements of some Venetians in 1370, he supposedly had promised not to attack the city before October 1365, at which time the Venetian ships loaded with goods would have already been on their way home. It is more likely, though, that the king concealed his intent to attack the Egyptian port, since he knew that the maritime nations trading there were opposed to such action. It was rumored that his military effort would be directed against the Turks of Asia Minor. However, the Venetian government was suspicious of him and ordered some of its ships to follow the fleet carrying Peter's forces after it left Venice. In addition, it enjoined its officers overseas to gather

Alexandria." In this context "hedificare" means "repair" rather than "build," since the *funduk* was already in existence and identified earlier as being Cypriot.

³¹ Without knowing the decisive Egyptian source, two historians had already reached the same conclusion, partly by relying on the reference to the Cypriot *funduk* mentioned in the previous note: Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre*, 2: 294, n. 1; Wilhelm Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au moyen âge*, 2 vols. (Leipzig 1885–1886), 2: 432.

information regarding the king's destination. Peter did not reveal his plan to attack Alexandria until all the forces had gathered off Rhodes. By that time neither Venice nor the other maritime nations could prevent the assault, from which their merchants were to suffer heavily. Their trade with Mamluk territories did not fully resume until 1370, after the conclusion of peace treaties. Philippe of Mézières played no part in the negotiations leading to the agreement between Cyprus and Egypt, which destroyed his hopes for a new crusade in the near future. He was then in Venice, where he donated to the confraternity of San Giovanni Evangelista a piece of the true cross. He had acquired it as a legacy from Peter Thomas, who had carried it in a processional cross during the attack on Alexandria.³²

The *funduk* al-Mūza destroyed in 1365 was not returned to the Cypriots immediately after the conclusion of the treaty between Cyprus and Egypt in 1370.³³ Indeed, in the following year, again according to an-Nuwayrī, one of its columns was taken to replace a broken column in the as-Sharkī mosque. The Cypriot *funduk* was restored and again available for the accommodation of Cypriot merchants and the storage of their goods at some later date, in any event before 1395 when Ogier VIII, lord of Anglure, visited Alexandria.³⁴

In the meantime, conditions had drastically changed in Cyprus. Genoa had occupied Famagusta in 1373 and consolidated its rule over the city in the following year.³⁵ The city's inhabitants had become Genoese subjects, unless they insisted on maintaining their previous national status. Therefore, in Alexandria they must have been lodged in the Genoese, rather than in the Cypriot *funduk*. Still, subjects of the Cypriot kings continued to trade in Alexandria by 1395, as noted

³² Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*. Vol. 1. *The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, 1976), 258–84, esp. 260–66, 283–84. For the statements of 1370, see *ibid.*, 262, n. 18.

³³ David Jacoby, "Greeks in the Maritime Trade of Cyprus around the Mid-Fourteenth Century," in Chryssa Maltezou, ed., *Kypros-Benetia. Koinos istorikes tyches = Cipro-Venezia: Comuni sorti storiche* (Atti del simposio internazionale, Atene, 1–3 marzo 2001) (Venice, 2002), 79–80, repr. in David Jacoby, *Latins, Greeks and Muslims: Encounters in the Eastern Mediterranean, Tenth-Fifteenth Centuries* (Farnham, 2009), no. XII. On the negotiations after 1365 leading to the resumption of trade between the West and Egypt in 1370, see Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 89–102; Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 168–69, 177–79.

³⁴ François Bonnardot and Auguste Longnon, eds., *Le Saint Voyage de Jherusalem du seigneur d'Anglure* (Paris, 1878), 78, par. 285.

³⁵ Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 202–10.

above, as well as some twenty years later. This is suggested by the presence of Greeks acting as Cypriot consuls. Petrus Zexomeno, who served before 1422, was a member of the Sozomenoi family attested from the 1370s as belonging to the restricted group of Greek nobility in Cyprus.³⁶

The evidence regarding the authority of the consuls representing the cities of southern France in Alexandria in the following period is rather confusing. Lionardo Frescobaldi met the consul "de' Franceschi" in 1384.³⁷ He presumably refers to the subjects of the kings of France. The merchants of Montpellier resided in the *funduk* "de France" or "d'Avignon et de France," attested from 1384 to 1402. The tavern in the *funduk* of Marseilles is documented in 1362, and consuls of the city from 1377 to 1403. However, Simone Regla appears with the title of consul of Marseilles and Provence in 1377 and others as consuls of Marseilles and France or simply of France from 1399 to 1402.³⁸ Ogier of Anglure, who visited Alexandria in 1395, noted the *funduks* of Narbonne, Marseilles and France.³⁹ The compound of Marseilles is also listed in 1422, as noted below, yet a consul of Avignon is mentioned in 1424 and one of Provence in 1426. On the other hand, Thomas Columbier was called consul of Marseilles in 1421 and 1426, and consul of France, Marseilles and Avignon in 1428. His son had the same function in 1455. It is unclear whether there was one consul in charge of all the merchants of Languedoc and Provence and one compound appearing under different names, or several compounds and consuls.⁴⁰

The number of national *funduks* increased after 1370. Ogier of Anglure is the first to mention the compounds of Naples, Ancona, and Candia, the main port of Venetian Crete.⁴¹ The compound of Naples also housed merchants from Gaeta and Amalfi.⁴² Ancona was granted a *funduk* between 1384 and 1395, and its consuls are recorded

³⁶ See Jacoby, "Greeks in the Maritime Trade of Cyprus," 80.

³⁷ Ed. by Gabriella Bartolini, in Gabriella Bartolini [and] Franco Cardini, *Nel nome di Dio facemo vela. Viaggio in Oriente di un pellegrino medievale* (Bari, 1991), 132.

³⁸ Bernard Doumerc, "Les marchands du Midi à Alexandrie au XV^e siècle," *Annales du Midi* 97 (1985), 271–72, 276; Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 145, 345.

³⁹ See above, n. 34.

⁴⁰ Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 145, 344–45; Verlinden, "Marchands chrétiens et juifs," 76; Doumerc, "Les marchands du Midi," 273.

⁴¹ See above, n. 34.

⁴² Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 138–39, 354–55.

until 1456. It also accommodated Florentine merchants, until their city obtained a compound of its own in 1422.⁴³ The establishment of Candia's *funduk* was achieved by Venice, since Cretans were Venetian subjects. It illustrates the intensity of Crete's trading with Alexandria, largely in the island's cheese, wine, honey and wax in addition to western goods transshipped in Candia.⁴⁴ Consuls of the Hospitallers of Rhodes are attested in the city from 1403 to 1448.⁴⁵

Ghillebert de Lannoy, in Alexandria on a mission of intelligence gathering sponsored by the kings of France and England and the duke of Burgundy, distinguished in 1422 between two groups of *funduks*: those of Venice, Genoa and Catalonia on the one hand, and the other "couchiers" or hostelries, apparently smaller, of Ancona, Naples, Marseilles, Aragonese Palermo, and Constantinople.⁴⁶ A business contract was concluded in the same year in the *funduk* of Naples.⁴⁷ Florence had its own *funduk* and consul from 1422 to around 1480. Some Florentine trading agents resided in Alexandria for extended periods.⁴⁸ Notarial documents of the same year refer to two individuals who had consecutively served as "consul Grecorum." The stationing of Byzantine consuls in Alexandria apparently began in 1386.⁴⁹ According to Lannoy, who visited Alexandria in 1422, there were no merchants in the *funduk* of Constantinople.⁵⁰ Rather, there were no resident merchants in that compound, since Byzantine trade with Egypt was con-

⁴³ Eliyahu Ashtor, "Il commercio levantino di Ancona nel basso medioevo," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 88 (1976), 221–30, repr. in Eliyahu Ashtor, *Studies on the Levantine Trade in the Middle Ages* (London, 1978), no. VIII; Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 141–43, 236–37, 358–61, 507–10.

⁴⁴ David Jacoby, "Creta e Venezia nel contesto economico del Mediterraneo orientale sino alla metà del Quattrocento," in Gherardo Ortalli, ed., *Venezia e Creta* (Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Iraklion-Chanià, 30 settembre–5 ottobre 1997) (Venice, 1998), 97–102, repr. in Jacoby, *Commercial Exchange*, no. VII.

⁴⁵ Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 234–35, 364–65 and n. 566; Verlinden, "Marchands chrétiens et juifs," 67, 82, for 1421–1422.

⁴⁶ Charles Potvin, ed., *Oeuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy* (Louvain, 1878), 109–10. There were continuously Catalan consuls in Alexandria, except in the years 1365–1370, because of the participation of Catalan sailors and merchants in the attack of Peter I on Alexandria, and in 1416–1429: Coulon, *Barcelone*, 48–50, 54–59, 75–85.

⁴⁷ Verlinden, "Marchands chrétiens et juifs," 80.

⁴⁸ Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 285–86, 352–53, 490, 495–99.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 68, 83; David Jacoby, "Byzantine Traders in Mamluk Egypt," in Anna Avramea, Angeliki Laiou, Evangelos Chrysos, eds., *Byzantium, State and Society. In Memory of Nikos Oikonomides* (Athens, 2003), 257, 260–64, repr. in Jacoby, *Latins, Greeks and Muslims*, no. XI.

⁵⁰ See above, n. 46.

ducted on a small scale.⁵¹ It is likely that this *funduk* was allotted to Ottoman merchants from Constantinople/Istanbul following the fall of the Byzantine capital in 1453. The Turkish *funduk* is mentioned by Felix Faber in the 1480s.⁵²

The number of western national *funduks* decreased in the second half of the fifteenth century. When Anselmo Adorno visited Alexandria in 1470, only five of them survived, namely those of Venice, Genoa, Catalonia, Ancona, and Florence.⁵³ In 1481 the Jewish traveler Meshullam of Volterra mentions two Venetian compounds, a Genoese, and a Catalan one. He further provides precious information about their location. All of them, he notes, are situated in the same street close to the city's gate.⁵⁴ Clearly, this was the gate of the customs house situated along the eastern harbor, through which all foreigners arriving by ship entered the city, and the nearby street must have been the major urban artery running from east to west.⁵⁵ The proximity between the Catalan, Genoese and Venetian compounds is also conveyed by Felix Faber, who visited them one after the other about the same time.⁵⁶ The Venetian Emmanuel Piloti, whose treatise was compiled between 1420 and 1438, seems to locate the Genoese *funduk* at some distance from those of the other two western nations, since he mentions a *fondigue* consecutively held by the Genoese, himself, and some local Muslims within the customs complex.⁵⁷ However, the context reveals that this

⁵¹ Jacoby, "Byzantine Traders," 255–67.

⁵² Cunradus D. Hassler, ed., *Fratri Felici Fabri Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Aegypti peregrinationem*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1843–1849) (hereafter: Fabri, *Evagatorium*), 3: 164: "fonticum constantinopolitanum Turcorum."

⁵³ Jacques Heers and Georgette de Groer, eds., *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470–1471)* (Paris, 1978), 166. Anselmo's son Giorgio was the author of the account.

⁵⁴ Avraham Yaari, ed., *Massa Meshullam mi-Volterra be-Eretz-Israel bi-shenath 141 (1481)* (= The Voyage of Meshullam of Volterra in the Land of Israel in the year (5)141 (1481)) (Jerusalem, 1948), 49 (Hebrew); incomplete English trans. by Elkan N. Adler, *Jewish Travellers. A Treasury of Travelogues from 9 Centuries* (London, 1930).

⁵⁵ On this artery in the eastern section of the city, see Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "Topographie d'Alexandrie médiévale," in Christian Décobert, ed., *Alexandrie médiévale 2* (Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Études alexandrines 8) (Cairo, 2002), 121–25.

⁵⁶ Fabri, *Evagatorium*, 3: 161–162, 163–164.

⁵⁷ Pierre-Herman. Dopp, ed., *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti sur le Passage en Terre Sainte (1420)* (Louvain – Paris, 1958), 181: "ung grant fondigue que par aultrefois il demouroient Genevois, mais depuis est demouré en main de Sarrasins; lequel fondigue je l'ay eu en mon gouvernement." Piloti resided in Alexandria from 1394–1397 to 1416–1419, now dating by Damien Coulon, "Du nouveau sur Emmanuel Piloti et son témoignage à la lumière de documents d'archives occidentaux," in Coulon,

funduk was one of the thirty warehouses within that complex in which goods were stored before their inspection by the sultan's officials, and not the compound in which the Genoese resided.⁵⁸ Both the Genoese and the Venetians had obtained such warehouses and the keys to lock them, respectively in 1290 and 1302.⁵⁹ In 1488 another Jewish traveler, Ovadiah of Bertinoro, also mentions the *funduks* of Venice, Genoa and Catalonia, to which he added Ancona. He confirms the locking of their gates by the Muslims at night and during the Friday prayer, and adds that the Western Christians found outside the compounds at these times risk death.⁶⁰

Western pilgrims did not appear in Alexandria before the fourteenth century. Following the First Crusade western pilgrimage to the Holy Land had become a mass movement channeled through the Frankish port of Acre, which continued despite the loss of Jerusalem to Sultan Saladin in 1187. It reached its peak in the thirteenth century with thousands of pilgrims arriving each year. Those wishing to visit the famous monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai in the thirteenth century also passed through Acre. The fall of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem and the destruction of Acre in 1291 brought an abrupt halt to Latin pilgrimage. The popes, their legates and crusading propagandists were opposed to its resumption, claiming that the substantial taxes collected from pilgrims would strengthen the Mamluk rulers of Egypt.

Latin pilgrimage to the Holy Land nevertheless resumed in the first decade of the fourteenth century, yet by then its nature and itineraries had drastically changed. It involved small numbers only, exclusively male pilgrims, and was socially selective. Since it had become more expensive it was largely limited to affluent individuals and those

Otten-Froux, Pagès, and Valerian, *Chemins d'outre-mer*, 1:160, 166–69. He compiled his treatise between 1420 and 1438.

⁵⁸ Description of the customs complex by Piloti: Dopp, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 180–82. Dopp, *ibid.*, Introduction, XXII, followed by Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 288, have misunderstood this passage.

⁵⁹ Eleonora Pallavicino, ed., *I Libri Iurium della Repubblica di Genova*, I/7 (Fonti per la storia della Liguria, XV; Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, Fonti XXXV), (Genoa, 2001), 81: “magasenos in dugana”; Thomas-Predelli, *Diplomatarium veneto-levantinum*, 1: 6: “magazenos in duana.”

⁶⁰ In fact, he mentions that there are consuls of these nations and “houses” in which Western Christians reside: Avraham Yaari, ed., *Igroth Eretz-Israel* (= Letters from the Land of Israel) (Ramath-Gan, 1971), 116 (Hebrew); English trans. Adler, *Jewish Travellers*. On the Genoese *funduk* admired by pilgrims in these years, see Fabri, *Evagatorium*, 3:163; Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 484–85.

enjoying their financial support. Shortly after 1320 Pope John XXII began to grant licenses to visit the Holy Sepulcher, and by 1328 a Genoese merchant had established a hostel for pilgrims in Famagusta.⁶¹ The Cypriot port served as transit station for pilgrims sailing to Jaffa on the way to Jerusalem and for others travelling to Alexandria to visit the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai and the Holy Land. Still others journeyed in the opposite direction, from Jerusalem across Sinai to Alexandria, where they embarked for their home journey. The passage through Alexandria allowed the pilgrims to see two columns between which St. Catherine had been martyred, the nearby prison in which she had been kept, and the place from which the angels had carried her body to Sinai.⁶²

The numbers of Latin pilgrims passing through Alexandria in the first decades of the fourteenth century were small, yet apparently large enough to induce the Egyptian jurist al-Subki, who died in 1335, to define them as a special category of non-Muslim foreigners, different from the class of Latin merchants.⁶³ The arrival of Latin pilgrims in Alexandria on board commercial vessels became a regular seasonal occurrence following the full resumption of direct Western trade and shipping with Egypt in 1345. However, their numbers did not warrant special transportation services, similar to the shipping line to Jaffa and Acre established by Venice about 1382.⁶⁴ Incidentally, in 1364 the Venetian Senate granted Andrea Venier, the Venetian consul stationed in Alexandria, permission to go on pilgrimage to the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai and to Jerusalem. In 1398, the consul Perazzo Malipiero was allowed to visit the monastery after the departure of the Venetian state galleys for Venice, when his presence in

⁶¹ Guillaume Mollat, *Jean XXII (1316–1334). Lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican* (Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 3e série), 16 vols. (Paris, 1904–1947), 7: 157, no. 40, 265.

⁶² For the last two paragraphs, see David Jacoby, "Pèlerinage médiéval et sanctuaires de Terre Sainte: la perspective vénitienne," *Ateneo Veneto*, 173 (N. S. 24) (1986), 27–35, repr. in Jacoby, *Studies*, no. IV; David Jacoby, "Pilgrimage in Crusader Acre: The *Pardouns d'Acre*," in Yitzhak Hen, ed., *De Sion exhibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem. Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 1) (Turnhout, 2001), 105–17; David Jacoby, "Christian Pilgrimage to Sinai until the Late Fifteenth Century," in *Holy Space, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai*, ed. by Robert S. Nelson and Kristen M. Collins, exhibition catalogue (Los Angeles, 2006), 79–93.

⁶³ For this definition, see Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 115.

⁶⁴ Jacoby, "Pèlerinage médiéval," 35–40.

Alexandria would be less required and his absence would not damage Venetian trading or other interests. They were to be replaced during their absence.⁶⁵

The important role of Famagusta as relay station for pilgrims accounts for the apparent intervention of King Peter I of Cyprus on their behalf. The extant documents regarding his negotiations with Egypt in 1367 and 1368 do not refer to them. However, it would seem that the Venetian–Egyptian treaty of 1370, which is missing, contained a clause ensuring that Latins visiting the Holy Sepulcher and the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai would not pay to the Mamluk authorities higher taxes than before the king's attack on Alexandria in 1365. The restoration of these conditions suggests that they had been discussed before the king's murder in 1369.⁶⁶

The pilgrimage accounts of the fourteenth and fifteenth century recording the common procedure after arrival in Alexandria differ to some extent. Symon Semeonis, the Franciscan monk who visited the city in 1323, provides a detailed and vivid report in this respect.⁶⁷ The sultan's officials who boarded the ship on which he had sailed registered all the passengers and goods on board and disembarked with them. After reaching land merchants and pilgrims alike were left waiting for several hours between the two gates of the customs house.⁶⁸ They were then brought before the city's governor, who sat at one of the gates. The pilgrims were presented to him by the Latin consuls stationed in the city and by merchants, most likely some of those with whom they had travelled and who presumably were already known in Alexandria. With the help of an interpreter they were questioned about the reason for their journey, since as pilgrims they were not coming to Alexandria on business trips. Their belongings and books were thoroughly searched, books with a Christian message being considered subversive material. Christian renegades present at the site accused them of being spies, which they denied. At the insistence of the consuls, in fact with their vouching, they were admitted to the city. Symon Semeonis fails to record a detail reported by Leonardo

⁶⁵ Giorgio Fedalto, ed., *La chiesa latina in Oriente. III, Documenti veneziani* (Verona, 1978), 99, no. 218, and 158, no. 391.

⁶⁶ Jacoby, "Christian Pilgrimage to Sinai," 85.

⁶⁷ Esposito, *Itinerarium Symonis Semeonis*, 46–48, 56, pars. 24, 26, 33.

⁶⁸ The two gates are mentioned in the description of the customs house by Piloti: Dopp, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 179–82; on casks of wine stored between the two gates: Verlinden, "Marchands chrétiens et juifs," 69, 80.

Frescobaldi, who visited Alexandria in 1384, namely that the consul in charge of the pilgrims came to the ship once it had anchored in the port, thus before the pilgrims disembarked.⁶⁹ Whether this is an omission or reflects a change in procedure cannot be determined. The specific function of the consul mentioned by Frescobaldi and the relation to the identity of the pilgrims will soon be examined.

Under the restrictive system imposed in Alexandria upon the Latins, Western pilgrims were compelled to reside in the national *funduks*, yet the rules applied to them differed to some extent from those applied to merchants. As recorded by Symon Semeonis, in 1323 "at the express command of the Governor [the pilgrims were] rapidly brought by the merchants to the *funduk* of Marseilles." The Irish monk and his group waited five days before being authorized to proceed with their journey. Incidentally, their residence in the compound's chapel implies that their number was rather small and that they were unable to afford more comfortable lodgings because they were Franciscans. Symon adds that the Muslims dislike poor people, especially Franciscans like him, since the population and the sultan "can make little profit out of their journey."⁷⁰ A French pilgrim who arrived in Alexandria between 1419 and 1425 also refers to the orders of the city's governor. He and his party "were sent to reside in the *funduk* of the Venetians."⁷¹

As noted above, pilgrims were lodged in 1323 in the *funduk* of Marseilles. Shortly before 1381 some of them were housed in the Catalan *funduk*,⁷² in 1384 in the French compound under the authority of the "consolo de' Franceschi et de' pellegrini,"⁷³ in 1395 in the *funduk* of Narbonne under the authority of the "consulle de Nerbonne et des pelerins,"⁷⁴ between 1419 and 1425 in the Venetian compound,⁷⁵ and in 1483 in the Catalan establishment.⁷⁶ There was no continuity regarding the nation lodging the pilgrims. The information in this respect is sparse and, therefore, the dates at which one *funduk* replaced

⁶⁹ Bartolini, *Nel nome di Dio*, 131–32.

⁷⁰ Esposito, *Itinerarium Symonis Semeonis*, 48, par. 27.

⁷¹ Henri Moranvillé, ed., "Un pèlerinage en Terre Sainte et au Sinaï au XV^e siècle," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 66 (1905), 32; dating between 1419 and 1425: *ibid.*, 71–72.

⁷² See above, n. 14.

⁷³ See above, n. 37.

⁷⁴ See above, n. 34.

⁷⁵ See above, n. 71.

⁷⁶ Fabri, *Evagatorium*, 3: 149.

another or how long it accommodated pilgrims cannot be determined. These changes have not been explained and have been misunderstood so far.

We may safely assume that as a matter of principle merchants and their goods enjoyed precedence over pilgrims in all western national *funduks*, yet this rule was not always strictly observed. Before 1381 the Catalan compound had housed pilgrims, even foreign ones, at the expense of Catalan merchants, as revealed by the instructions issued in that year to the Catalan consul in Alexandria. He was to admit foreign pilgrims only if there were no merchants or other individuals of his nation requiring accommodation.⁷⁷ In the absence of room in their national *funduk* pilgrims must have been lodged by the "consul of the pilgrims," who obviously was in charge of pilgrims whose nation lacked an installation in Alexandria. It follows that not all the pilgrims arriving in Alexandria were placed under the authority of that consul and lodged in one *funduk*, as his title and some pilgrim accounts seem to imply.

Only one consul at the time was responsible for the accommodation of pilgrims not lodged in the *funduks* of other nations. He and his *funduk* thus enjoyed a monopoly in this respect. Significantly, mostly consuls of minor trading nations were in charge of these pilgrims. There is good reason to believe that a direct correlation existed between insufficient revenue to maintain the upkeep and operation of their respective *funduk* and their offer to house foreign pilgrims. The limited capacity of these nations to fill their *funduk* with their own merchants, the latter's goods, and their own pilgrims prompted them to accommodate foreigners.⁷⁸

The lodging of pilgrims was apparently a lucrative business. This is well illustrated by the Catalan consuls who had preferred to house Catalan and even foreign pilgrims before 1381.⁷⁹ The revenue deriving from them must have been larger than from merchants, whose

⁷⁷ See above, n. 14.

⁷⁸ See David Abulafia, "The Levant Trade of the Minor Cities in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Strengths and Weaknesses," *Asian and African Studies* 22, nos. 1-3 (1988) = Benjamin Z. Kedar and Abraham L. Udovitch, eds., *The Medieval Levant. Studies in Memory of Eliyahu Ashtor (1914-1984)*, 183-202, esp. 201, on the limited mercantile capacity of Narbonne, the *funduk* of which housed the pilgrims in 1395, and the possible involvement of the city in the transport of pilgrims as an alternative field of operation.

⁷⁹ See above.

payments for lodging and storage were presumably regulated by the authorities of their own nation. In 1384 the pilgrims housed in the French *funduk* were at first assigned rooms lacking beds, yet accepted to pay higher fees when the consul offered to lodge them in his own residence, located within the same compound.⁸⁰ It is likely that the *funduks* of Venice and Genoa, the two major Western nations whose merchants were operating in Alexandria, were mostly filled to capacity with merchants, their goods, and pilgrims of their respective nation following the arrival of the seasonal maritime convoys.

Since the *funduks* of the minor trading nations were small, in some years they were sometimes unable to house all those assigned to the consul of the pilgrims. Such was apparently the case between 1419 and 1425, when some French pilgrims were sent to the Venetian compounds, clearly because space was still available there.⁸¹ The continuation of this policy in the 1480s is implied by Felix Faber, who stayed in the Catalan *funduk*. He states that there were only few merchants and goods in that compound and that it housed "all Christian pilgrims, unless by a particular favor the Venetians and the Genoese are willing to house them in their (respective) *fondaco*."⁸² Two factors account for the ample space available in the Catalan *funduk* at that time. Catalan trade with Alexandria had been declining from the 1430s, and since it was largely based upon *commenda* contracts involving traveling merchants, there were no or few commercial agents based for extended periods in the *funduk*. The absence of resident notaries is a further indication in this respect.⁸³ However, since the compound could not house all the Latin pilgrims requiring accommodation, some of them were lodged by the Venetian and Genoese consuls.

Obviously, permission to house foreign pilgrims had to be obtained from the Egyptian authorities, which strictly controlled the movements of Latin foreigners and determined the location of their residence in Alexandria. Permission was awarded in return for an annual payment to the sultan's treasury, as explicitly stated by Ogier of Anglure.⁸⁴ The

⁸⁰ See above, n. 69.

⁸¹ Moranvillé, "Un pèlerinage en Terre Sainte," 22.

⁸² Fabri, *Evagatorium*, 3: 149, 163.

⁸³ Coulon, *Barcelone*, 586–95, 610–12.

⁸⁴ Bonnardot and Longnon, *Le Saint Voyage à Jherusalem*, 78, par. 285: "Et en nul des autres fondiques ne peulent estre hesbergez les pelerins, pour ce que en icel-lui fondique a official de par le Soudan, lequel (= the consul) est chrestien, et scet combien il doit rendre au Soudan de treu chascun an, et scet combien il doit avoir de

function of “consul of the pilgrims” must have been negotiated anew each year or after a specific number of years and was presumably granted to the highest bidder, unless political considerations prompted the sultans to act otherwise. In addition, the sultan’s treasury collected one ducat from each pilgrim. Lionardo Frescobaldi reports that in 1384 the tax was paid upon arrival at the customs house.⁸⁵ Ogier records that in 1395 the consul of Narbonne collected it, yet fails to mention at which location.⁸⁶

Several factors account for the residential restrictions imposed upon foreign Christians in Egypt in the period covered here. Control of mercantile activity and its taxation were of prime importance to ensure substantial revenue for the sultan’s treasury. Yet, in addition, there was a deep mistrust of foreign Christians. Egypt’s struggle against Byzantium until the eleventh century was followed after the First Crusade by confrontation with the Latins settled in the Levant and additional western forces, as well as with western armies launching crusades and expeditions such as the attack of 1365 by Peter I of Cyprus. The tenth-century Arab geographer Ibn Ḥawqal blamed Muslim rulers who in their eagerness for profit allow the Byzantines to send their ships to Muslim ports to engage in trade and enable their agents to travel in their respective countries and thereby gather information.⁸⁷ Clearly, in addition to diplomatic envoys and spies, merchants, especially those stationed for extended periods in Egypt, as well as ship crews occasionally engaged in intelligence gathering or, in any event, returned home with valuable information. Not surprisingly, spies often posed as traders. The agreement of 1154 between the Egyptian caliph al-Zafir and Pisa specified that Pisans should not knowingly bring to Egypt Franks from the crusader states and present them as merchants.⁸⁸ As noted earlier, the pilgrims arriving in 1323 were accused of being spies.⁸⁹

The danger deriving from cooperation of the sultan’s subjects, especially local Christians yet also Muslims, with foreigners was also a

chacun chrestian qui entre en Alixendre puisqu’il soit pelerine.” This pilgrim was not well informed about the complexity of pilgrim housing.

⁸⁵ Bartolini, *Nel nome di Dio*, 132.

⁸⁶ See above, n. 34.

⁸⁷ Ibn Hauqal, *Configuration de la terre (Kitab surat al-ard)*, trans. Johannes H. Kramers and Gaston Wiet, 2 vols. (Beirut – Paris, 1964), 1: 193.

⁸⁸ Amari, *I diplomi arabi*, 242: “in similitudine mercatorum”; correct dating by Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant*, 1: 392–94.

⁸⁹ See above, 418.

constant preoccupation of the Mamluk authorities. The distinguished Egyptian administrator Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmārī (1301–1349) recorded various regulations limiting contact between local and Latin Christians in Mamluk territories. The housing of Latins in monasteries, a reference to pilgrims, and collaboration with foreign powers through the intermediary of Latin merchants were strictly prohibited.⁹⁰ In his *Le songe du vieil pelerin* Philippe de Mézières explicitly refers to western merchants as a source of information on Mamluk Egypt and Syria, and to local Muslims offering their services in this respect to pilgrims.⁹¹ In his *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire* he states that he continuously questioned merchants, veteran knights and converted Muslims to gather information on Egypt, Syria, Turkey and Tartary.⁹² Not surprisingly, the Egyptian authorities considered merchants and pilgrims to be highly suspicious and kept them under close watch. Emanuel Piloti, for many years around 1400 a resident of Alexandria, provided in his crusading treatise detailed information about Egypt and Alexandria in particular, including topographic indications useful for the city's conquest.⁹³ The negative portrayal of Westerners as spies and aggressors in Egyptian popular literature derived to some extent from the attack of Peter I on Alexandria.⁹⁴

The restrictive and coercive policy applied by the Egyptian authorities to the Latins had various social implications. It accounts for the particular social profile of the *funduks* in which they resided. The

⁹⁰ C. E. Bosworth, "Christian and Jewish Religious Dignitaries in Mamluk Egypt and Syria: Qalqashandī's Information on their Hierarchy, Titulature, and Appointment (II)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (1972), 202. Bosworth, *ibid.*, 199, refers to al-ʿUmārī as Ibn Fadlallah and *ibid.*, 201–202, translates a passage from his *Taʿrīf* without mentioning this work: "Let the Patriarch [of the Melkites] take special care not to shelter in his ecclesiastical foundations any suspicious stranger (,,) let him be very careful not to conceal any letter reaching him from an external ruler, and not to correspond with external rulers." My thanks to Prof. Johannes Pahlitzsch, University of Mainz, for checking the Arabic text and identifying its author.

⁹¹ Philippe de Mézières, chancellor of Cyprus, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, ed. G. W. Coopland (Cambridge, 1969), 2: 426: "Et dira que toutes les foyes que ta royalle prudence et magnificence vouldroit avoir espies avec le souldan il en trouveroit asses, c'est assavoir des merchans cretiens qui conversent en Egipte et en Surie et des propres Sarrazins qui, en ce cas et semblable, par les pelereins lui ont offert leur service."

⁹² Philippe de Mézières, *Une epistre lamentable el consolatoire. Adressée en 1397 à Philippe le Hardi, duc de Bourgogne, sur la défaite de Nicopolis (1396)*, eds. Philippe Contamine and Jacques Paviot (Paris, 2008), 212.

⁹³ Dopp, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 180–83, on the latter.

⁹⁴ Thomas Herzog, "Francs et commerçants francs à Alexandrie dans le roman de Baybars," in Décobert, *Alexandrie médiévale* 2, 181–94.

population of these compounds was exclusively male, except for western prostitutes.⁹⁵ It was composed of visiting merchants, pilgrims and travelers, in addition to resident merchants who, however, never settled permanently in the *funduks*. Marital bonds with local Christian women were not prohibited,⁹⁶ yet practically impossible in view of the institutionalized residential and social segregation. Still, Leonardo Frescobaldi, who resided in the French compound in 1384, noted that its consul, who apparently was stationed in Alexandria for a long time, had married an indigenous Christian woman, "both having less than an ounce of (Christian) faith."⁹⁷

The language barrier clearly hampered cross-cultural communication between Latins on the one hand, Egyptian officials and the local population on the other. The obstacle was partly overcome with the assistance of long-term Latin residents who had acquired at least a rudimentary knowledge of colloquial Arabic and especially through the intervention of official and private interpreters, called *dragomans* (from Arabic *tardjūmān*). Interpreters also served as middlemen in business transactions with indigenous residents. Most of them belonged to the indigenous communities, some were foreign Jews or Greeks attached to the western consuls, and others were Latin converts to Islam.⁹⁸ On behalf of the authorities local interpreters occasionally ensured the safety of Latins wandering through the city,⁹⁹ and used their linguistic proficiency to act as spies monitoring the movement and business operations of the Latins. According to an unpublished Arabic document of 1423 three local interpreters, two Muslims and a Jew, swore to the governor of Alexandria that they would immediately

⁹⁵ In 1262 Sultan Baybars ordered the expulsion of Frankish prostitutes from Alexandria: Étienne M. Quatremère, trans., *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1837–1845), 1/1: 221; in the Catalan compound: see above, n. 14. See also Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 144–46.

⁹⁶ Willi Heffening, *Das islamische Fremdenrecht bis zu den islamisch-fränkischen Staatsverträgen. Eine rechtshistorische Studie zum Fiqh* (Beiträge zur Rechts- und Wirtschaftsleben des islamischen Orients, 1) (Hannover, 1925), 80–81.

⁹⁷ Bartolini, *Nel nome di Dio*, 132: "ha moglie cristiana nata in Saracina, et che fra 'mendue hanno meno che una derrata di fede."

⁹⁸ Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 289–90; Eliyahu Ashtor, "New Data for the History of Levantine Jewries in the Fifteenth Century," *Bulletin of the Institute of Jewish Studies* 3 (1975), 88–89, repr. in Eliyahu Ashtor, *The Jews and the Mediterranean Economy, 10th–15th Centuries* (London 1983) no. VIII; Verlinden, "Marchands chrétiens et juifs," 54, a Cypriot Greek established in Alexandria acts as interpreter of the Venetian consul; on the surname Sosomeno.

⁹⁹ Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 268–69.

inform him of all the goods arriving in the city or stored in the customs warehouses and would refrain from acting as interpreters or middlemen involving these goods before carrying out this obligation.¹⁰⁰

Everyday economic exchanges promoted only limited social intercourse and cross-cultural interaction between Latins and members of the indigenous communities. Latin acculturation to the Egyptian milieu was restricted to aspects of material culture. Western merchants acquired high-grade Mamluk silks, much valued and considered objects of prestige in the West, as well as jewelry, metalwork and various other oriental artifacts, both for trade and personal use. Portable oriental objects were transferred to the West and adorned the mansions of the social elite in Venice and other western cities. Oriental details and references were absorbed into the Venetian building tradition, both in public and private structures. The impact of these elements was particularly widespread and varied in Venice, the major western trading partner of Egypt.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Labib, *Handelsgeschichte*, 502–503, no. 10.

¹⁰¹ On silks, see David Jacoby, “Oriental Silks go West: a Declining Trade in the Later Middle Ages,” in Gerhard Wolf and Catarina Arcangeli, eds., *Islamic Artifacts in the Mediterranean World: Trade, Gift Exchange and Artistic Transfer* (Venice, 2010), 71, 76, 78–81. On other commodities and architecture, see Deborah Howard, *Venice and the East. The Impact of the Islamic World on Venetian Architecture 1100–1500* (New Haven and London, 2000), 58–62, 133–65; Deborah Howard, “Venice as an ‘Eastern City,’” in *Venice and the Islamic World 828–1797*, Exhibition catalogue, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (New Haven and London, 2006), 63–67.

« ALEXANDRIE, VILLE SOUS HAUTE SURVEILLANCE. »
VOYAGE ET ESPIONNAGE AUX XIV-XV^e SIÈCLES,
D'APRÈS LES RÉCITS DE VOYAGEURS ET DE PÈLERINS
OCCIDENTAUX

Henri Gourinard

INTRODUCTION

Alexandrie est « l'entrée et l'issue du Caire et de toute l'Égypte¹. » Ainsi s'exprime, au début des années 1420, Emmanuel Piloti, membre d'une famille de marchands vénitiens installée en Crète. Il a l'intention de mettre sa longue expérience en Égypte au profit d'un « passage général » pour délivrer Jérusalem.

Cette doctrine stratégique n'est pourtant pas nouvelle. Une fois que les croisés eurent réussi à faire sauter le « verrou » d'Ascalon (1153), la route de l'Égypte s'ouvrit devant eux. Car c'est au Caire que se trouvaient les forces vives de l'islam. Pour pouvoir s'implanter durablement au Levant, les croisés devaient donc conquérir ou, au moins, affaiblir l'Égypte. Après la chute de Saint-Jean d'Acre (1291) et la liquidation des derniers établissements francs au Levant, les théoriciens du « recouvrement de la Terre Sainte », parmi lesquels figurent Piloti, et avant lui, Philippe de Mézières, ne font que reprendre et vulgariser cette idée.

Signe de l'efficacité de leur travail de propagandistes de la croisade, on retrouve leurs thèses dans de nombreux récits de pèlerins contemporains. Citons le plus célèbre d'entre eux, le Dominicain du couvent d'Ulm, Félix Fabri qui déclare, dans les années 1480, qu'il est « impossible aux Chrétiens de rester en Terre Sainte tant qu'ils n'auront pas d'abord conquis l'Égypte². »

Qu'en pense le pouvoir mamelouk ? En 1365, les croisés conduits devant les murs d'Alexandrie par Pierre 1^{er} de Lusignan et Pierre de

¹ Emmanuel Piloti, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti sur le passage en Terre sainte (1420)*, éd. Pierre-Hermann Dopp (Louvain, 1958), 27 (ci-après Piloti).

² Félix Fabri, *Le Voyage en Égypte de Félix Fabri, 1483*, 3 vols, éd. et trad. Gisèle Hurseaux et Jacques Masson, (Le Caire, 1975), 761 (ci-après Fabri).

Thomas ne trouvent qu'une médiocre garnison pour s'opposer à eux. Le principal port égyptien ne revêtait-il donc qu'une faible valeur stratégique aux yeux du sultan? Mais alors, pourquoi les auteurs de récits de voyages accordent-ils une place si grande à la description du système de défense de la ville: sa double rangée de murailles, le fort du sultan Qāyṭbāy gardant l'entrée du port et les collines servant à la vigilance maritime?³

A l'opposé, les auteurs arabes qui, mieux que les pèlerins occidentaux, pourraient nous renseigner avec précision sur la situation militaire et sur les mesures de sécurité prises en vue de la défense du port, ne semblent accorder à Alexandrie qu'une place très secondaire dans leurs traités. C'est le constat que dresse Claude Cahen pour la période fatimide-ayyoubide: «dans le monde musulman médiéval, où le commerce à grand rayon occupait, par rapport aux autres civilisations de ce temps, une place si importante, la littérature qui l'exprime directement est, dans la masse de la production arabe, presque insignifiante⁴.» L'historien doit donc se contenter de la version des «vic-times:» marchands, voyageurs et pèlerins occidentaux à l'encontre de qui sont prises ces mesures.

Ces dernières sont-elles justifiées? Tous les visiteurs occidentaux présents en Egypte sont-ils des espions en puissance? Ils le sont, en réalité, souvent malgré eux. A Chypre, où certains font escale, ils subissent parfois l'interrogatoire des gens du parti favorables à la croisade, parmi lesquels se trouve Philippe de Mézières. Philippe Contamine a, par exemple, récemment mis en lumière la figure d'un chevalier poitevin nommé Perceval de Couloigne dans la préparation de l'expédition de 1365. Pierre 1^{er} aurait eu recours à sa connaissance de l'Egypte acquise en captivité pour guider les mouvements de son armée⁵. Et, à en juger par la fréquence avec laquelle il apparaît dans la

³ Citons par exemple ce qu'en dit le compagnon de voyage de Fabri, le Franciscain Paulus Walther: «Item, Alexandria est satis magna civitas, habens muros altos et fortes et valde multa et grossissima presidia tamquam turres, que reddunt murum [...]», cf. Paulus Walther, *Itinerarium ad Terram Sanctam et ad Sanctam Catharinam*, éd. Matthias Sollweck (Tübingen, 1892), 241 (ci-après Walther).

⁴ Claude Cahen, «Douanes et commerce dans les ports méditerranéens de l'Egypte médiévale d'après le *Minhāj* d'al-Makhzūmī», *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 7 (1964), 217.

⁵ Philippe Contamine, «De Chypre à la Prusse et à la Flandre. Les aventures d'un chevalier poitevin: Perceval de Couloigne, seigneur de Pugny, du Breuil-Bernard et de Pierrefitte», *Chemins d'Outremer. Etudes sur la Méditerranée médiévale offertes à Michel Balard*, éd. Danile Coulon et Catherine Otten-Froux (Paris, 2004), 133-

Prise d'Alexandrie, il est plus que probable qu'il ait été un des principaux informateurs de Guillaume de Machaut⁶.

Philippe de Mézières, l'un des avocats les plus ardents de la croisade, met en scène dans *Le songe du vieil pèlerin* la coutume de la reine Vérité et de ses Dames « tantost que elles estoient hebergées en aucune cité ou chastel », d'envoyer « leurs chambrières par tout espier se elles pouvroient trouver personnes et lieux là où elles peussent profiter ne prester à usure de leurs riches besans⁷. » Au-delà de l'allégorie, le chancelier de Pierre 1^{er} nous laisse entrevoir comment la collecte de renseignements auprès des pèlerins en escale dans l'île a pu transformer Chypre en une base d'opérations de l'espionnage européen dans l'empire mamelouk.

Il est donc logique de voir le pouvoir du Caire prendre des mesures drastiques à l'encontre de ces visiteurs espions. Mais, on peut se demander si la sévérité d'un tel dispositif anti-espionnage ne répond qu'à des motifs de sécurité. A un moment où l'Égypte a un besoin aigu en devises, les contrôles effectués sur la population marchande et pèlerine à Alexandrie, n'obéiraient-ils pas plutôt à des considérations d'ordre financier ?

LA VIGILANCE MARITIME

Lorsqu'une voile pointe à l'horizon, écrit le pèlerin allemand Bernhard von Breydenbach, à l'extrême fin du XV^e siècle, les veilleurs positionnés sur deux hauteurs à l'intérieur de la ville préviennent l'émir d'Alexandrie au moyen de pigeons ou, selon son contemporain Joos van Ghiste, en faisant des signes à l'aide de petits drapeaux qu'ils élèvent afin d'indiquer leur nombre et leur pays d'origine⁸. » Puis, l'émir envoie une petite embarcation rapide en reconnaissance pour s'informer de la condition de ceux qui s'approchent et pour les guider à

44. Je tiens à remercier Philippe Contamine pour avoir attiré mon attention sur ce personnage.

⁶ Guillaume de Machaut, *The Capture of Alexandria*, éd. et trad. Peter Edbury et Janet Shirley (Ashgate 2001), 10.

⁷ Dora Bell, *Etude sur le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin de Philippe de Mézières* (Genève, 1955), 30.

⁸ Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes: un viaggiatore del Quattrocento a Gerusalemme e in Egitto*, éd. et trad. Gabriella Bartolini et Giulio Caporali (Rome, 1999), 242; Joos van Ghiste, *Voyage en Egypte, 1482-1483*, éd. et trad. Renée Bauwens-Preaux (Le Caire, 1976), 122.

travers les bancs de sable et les écueils qui encombrent l'entrée du port. Il s'agit là d'une mission délicate car le navire entrant au port est parfois bien mieux armé que la frêle embarcation de la police portuaire. Félix Fabri rapporte ainsi qu'il a vu un navire vénitien mettre en déroute une navette de surveillance maritime et faire une entrée « en force » dans le port, sans que personne n'y oppose la moindre résistance⁹.

En signe de soumission, tout bateau entrant au port d'Alexandrie doit baisser les voiles à mi-mât, lorsqu'il double le château qui en défend l'accès et qui, selon Arnold von Harff de passage à Alexandrie en 1497, symbolise le sultan. Mais, du fait des bonnes relations entre la Sérénissime et l'Égypte, les navires de Venise sont accueillis par une salve d'honneur¹⁰. Jean Thenaud affirme que ce privilège est également concédé aux navires du roi de France, François 1^{er} ou au moins à l'ambassade dont il fait partie¹¹.

Aucune source du XIV^e siècle ne mentionne de contrôles en haute mer, mais le Franciscain Symon Fitzsimon, dans les années 1320, et le pèlerin florentin Lionardo Frescobaldi, soixante ans plus tard, rapportent de manière assez détaillée, l'inspection des navires chrétiens en rade d'Alexandrie. La police maritime, une fois montée à bord, nous dit Fitzsimon, procède à l'enregistrement des noms des passagers et à l'inventaire détaillé de la marchandise, puis transmet son rapport à l'émir en envoyant un pigeon¹². Sur ce dernier point, il faut croire que les usages douaniers n'étaient pas strictement établis puisque Frescobaldi remarque que les officiers alexandrins procèdent à cet inventaire « *sanza scrivere niente* » [sans rien écrire] comme c'est leur coutume¹³. Les voyageurs de la fin du XV^e siècle, en revanche, insistent

⁹ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Égypte*, 692–93.

¹⁰ Arnold von Harff, « Le pèlerinage du chevalier Arnold von Harff », éd. et trad. Paul Bleser, *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 95 (1990), 70. Le gouverneur du fort est nommé directement par le sultan du Caire devant qui il répond de ses actes. Cf. *infra*, note 36.

¹¹ Jean Thenaud, *Le Voyage d'outremer de Jean Thenaud, suivi de la relation de l'ambassade de Domenico Trevisan auprès du Soudan d'Égypte (1512)*, éd. Charles Schefer (Genève, 1971), 21.

¹² Symon Fitzsimon, « Le voyage de Symon Semeonis d'Irlande en Terre sainte » (texte partiel) éd. Christiane Deluz, *Croisades et pèlerinages. Récits, chroniques et voyages en Terre sainte, XII^e–XVI^e siècle*, éd. Danielle Régnier-Bohler (Paris, 1997), 972.

¹³ Lionardo Frescobaldi, « *Nel Nome di Dio facemmo vela* ». *Viaggio in Oriente di un pellegrino medievale*, éd. et trad. Gabriella Bartolini et Franco Cardini (Bari, 1991), 132.

sur l'importance de l'écrit lorsqu'ils mentionnent l'usage des pigeons voyageurs¹⁴.

Enfin, les officiers mamelouks confisquent les gréements du navire, précise Fitzsimon. Malgré sa sévérité une telle mesure n'obéit pas exclusivement à des considérations de sécurité. Il s'agit autant de prévenir une action hostile contre la ville que d'empêcher le navire d'échapper à la douane. C'est pour cela, poursuit le moine irlandais, que des gardes sont laissés sur le navire¹⁵. Toutes ces précautions ont un but bien précis : identifier les arrivants et les diriger vers le port qui leur échoit.

Il existe, en effet, deux ports à Alexandrie « séparés par une étroite bande de terre », nous informe Fabri¹⁶. Le témoignage de Ghillebert de Lannoy, envoyé de Philippe le Bon, vient le confirmer : « et y a, en manière d'une langue de terre, environ d'une mille de large entre iceulz deux pors¹⁷. » Il s'agit de l'Heptastade, cette digue jetée par les Ptolémées entre le continent et l'île de Pharos qui, avec le temps et l'accumulation des débris urbains, s'est considérablement élargie. C'est là que s'implante la ville nouvelle, à l'époque ottomane (fig. 1).

Là où les sources divergent c'est sur la fonction et la localisation de ces deux ports. Un traité de navigation de la fin du XIII^e siècle mentionne l'existence d'un Vieux Port à l'ouest et d'un autre port qu'il appelle « Port du Phare », à l'est¹⁸. Un siècle plus tard, Frescobaldi rapporte que son navire—une cogue vénitienne—a mouillé dans le Vieux Port¹⁹. Son contemporain Niccolò de Martoni (1394) parle d'un « port des chrétiens », grand et circulaire, distant de la ville d'environ trois milles et d'un port des musulmans situé au sud (sud-ouest ?) :

La ville d'Alexandrie a deux ports pour les navires, à savoir le premier port dans lequel mouillent les navires des chrétiens : c'est un grand port et, d'après ce que j'ai pu en voir, il a une forme circulaire de trois milles de long. Il est distant d'un trait d'arbalète de la porte de la ville. Il y a un

¹⁴ Cf. Ghistele, *Voyage en Egypte*, 123 et Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes*, 245.

¹⁵ Fitzsimon, « Le voyage de Symon Semeonis », 973.

¹⁶ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 718.

¹⁷ Ghillebert de Lannoy, *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy voyageur, diplomate et moraliste*, éd. Charles Potvin (Louvain, 1878), 101.

¹⁸ *Il Compasso da navigare*, éd. B. R. Motzo, *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia della Università di Cagliari* 8 (1947), 64 : « La dicta cettade à II porti : uno che se clama Porto velloio, che è da ponente a la dicta ponta de lo Faro ; e l'altro porto, e clamase lo Porto de lo Faro, che è da levante. » Je tiens à remercier vivement David Jacoby qui m'a aimablement communiqué ce texte.

¹⁹ Frescobaldi, « *Nel Nome di Dio facemmo vela* », 131.

autre port, du côté opposé, au sud, dans lequel les navires chrétiens ne peuvent accéder. Dans ce port, jettent l'ancre les navires des Sarrasins²⁰.

La relation de Ghillebert de Lannoy, généralement digne de foi, mentionne à nouveau ce Vieux Port²¹. Situé à main « dextre » du Nouveau (en venant de la mer), il est accessible par vent de « west-zuut-west. » C'est par lui que Pierre 1^{er} de Lusignan a lancé son assaut contre Alexandrie en 1365, comme le confirme Guillaume de Machaut :

Si ont tant nagie et vogue
Par mi la mer qui a po gue
Quau viez port devant alixandre
Vint li bons roys sans plus attendre
En un jeudi ce mest avis²².

Il est, depuis lors, fermé aux navires chrétiens, mais—détail intéressant pour une expédition future—il n'est pas fermé par une chaîne, comme ce sera le cas dans la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle²³. Le géographe vénitien Livio Sanuto (1588), précise en effet que le port réservé aux musulmans est appelé en arabe *Mars al-Silsila* c'est à dire le port de la chaîne²⁴. La représentation de Braun et Hogenberg, contemporain du traité de Sanuto, laisse plutôt entendre qu'il s'agit d'une sorte de herse (fig. 2).

²⁰ Niccolò de Martoni, « Relation de pèlerinage de Nicolas de Martoni (1394–1395) », éd. et trad. Léon Legrand *Revue de l'Orient Latin* 3, (1894), 586–87 : « Civitas Alexandria habet duos portus naviliorum, videlicet primum portum in quo manent omnia navilia christianorum, qui portus est magnus et girat in circuitu, ut michi visum fuit, per tria milearia, et distat a porta civitatis per unam balistratam. Est alius portus ab alio latere versus meridiem, ad quem non possunt accedere navilia christianorum, et in dicto portu manent navilia Sarracenorum. » Traduction de l'auteur.

²¹ Lannoy, *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy*, 101 : « Et demeure le viel à l'arriver à main dextre du nouvel [...] »

²² Guillaume de Machaut, *La prise d'Alixandre (the Taking of Alexandria)*, éd. et trad. R. Barton Palmer (New York, 2002), 130; Niccolò de Martoni, « Relation de pèlerinage », 586–87 : « et in dicto portu [l'ancien port] manent navilia Sarracenorum. Ratio est quia a portu predicto capta fuit civitas Alexandria per regem Ciprianus. »

²³ Lannoy, *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy*, 101 : « Item, dedens le viel port, n'ose entrer nulle navire de Cristiens [...] » Voir aussi Martoni, « Relation de pèlerinage », 587.

²⁴ Livio Sanuto, *Geografia di M. Livio Sanuto distinta in XII libri con XII tavole* (Venise, 1588), 104 : « V'è un' altro porto chiamato Marsaelssilsela, cioè il porto della catena, nelquale si riducono altri navilii delle parti di Barbaria. I Christiani pagano dieci per cento, e i Mahomettani cinque, sii nell' entrare, come nell' uscire [...] » La cartographie de la fin du XVI^e siècle vient confirmer ses dires, cf. Vue du port d'Alexandrie par Braun et Hogenberg (1575).

A la veille de la conquête ottomane, la situation semble inchangée. Le Franciscain Francesco Suriano (1503) et l'ambassadeur vénitien Domenico Trevisan (1512) s'accordent tous deux à identifier le Vieux Port—le meilleur des deux, précisent-ils—avec le port des musulmans²⁵.

Hormis le témoignage incertain de Frescobaldi, Félix Fabri semble être le seul à prendre le contre-pied de tout ce que disent les voyageurs occidentaux qui l'ont précédé ou suivi. Selon lui, le Vieux Port est « destiné à l'attache des navires des Chrétiens », alors que le Nouveau est à l'usage exclusif des « navires des infidèles²⁶. » Il s'agit en fait d'une simple erreur factuelle sur l'appellation des deux ports car la suite de son récit nous prouve qu'il les localise correctement²⁷.

On pourrait cependant supposer que certains navires chrétiens—vénitiens en particulier—aient été admis dans le Vieux Port. Ce serait le cas de la cogue vénitienne de Frescobaldi²⁸. On comprendrait alors mieux ce qu'il nous dit de la crainte de son équipage d'avoir à passer la nuit en rade à cause des Sarrasins²⁹. A l'inverse, on pourrait imaginer que des navires musulmans aient pu, à l'occasion, jeter l'ancre dans le Nouveau Port. Ce n'est pas impossible car l'on sait qu'à l'époque ottomane, lorsque le Vieux Port est tombé en désuétude, un angle du Nouveau Port protégé par la pointe orientale de l'île du Pharos, est attribué aux navires du Grand Turc³⁰. Il se pourrait même que cette

²⁵ Francesco Suriano, *Il trattato di Terra Santa e dell'Oriente di Frate Francesco Suriano*, éd. Girolamo Golubovitch (Milan, 1900), 187: « questa città ha doi porti: l'uno se dimanda porto vecchio, grando e sicurissimo: et in esso non vi lassano intrare verun naviglio de Christiani; l'altro è grande et assai bono. » Voir aussi Domenico Trevisan, *Le Voyage d'outremer de Jean Thénau, suivi de la relation de l'ambassade de Domenico Trevisan auprès du Soudan d'Égypte (1512)*, éd. Charles Schefer (Genève, 1971), 175.

²⁶ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Égypte*, 718.

²⁷ Felix Fabri, *Fratrīs Felicis Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabia et Egypti peregrinationem*, éd. K. D. Hassler (Tübingen, 1843–1849), 175–76: il appelle « *portus anterior* » le port oriental réservé aux chrétiens et « *posterior* », celui destiné à l'ancre des navires des « infidèles. »

²⁸ Contrairement à ce que soutient Anne Wolff, Frescobaldi écrit seulement qu'il a passé la nuit dans le Vieux Port sans préciser s'il se trouve à l'est ou à l'ouest. Cf. Wolff, Anne, « Merchants, pilgrims and naturalists: Alexandria through European eyes from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century », *Alexandria, real and imagined* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 199–225: « Reaching Alexandria, the *Pola* [la cogue vénitienne dans laquelle il s'est embarqué] dropped anchor in the eastern harbor. »

²⁹ Frescobaldi, « *Nel Nome di Dio facemmo vela* », 132: « per temenza de'Saracini gittamo i ferri di lungi alla terra stando da primo sono insino a di in tanta afflizione che nello inferno non si potrebbe avere di più. »

³⁰ Le Vieux Port ne servirait plus qu'à l'ancre des galères, au milieu du XVII^e siècle. Cf. Gabriel Brémont, *Voyage en Égypte de Gabriel Brémont (1643–1645)*, éd.

configuration fût déjà de vigueur avant la conquête ottomane. On pourrait ainsi supposer qu'à l'époque de Frescobaldi, certains navires musulmans de fort tonnage aient déjà déserté le vieux port, à l'ouest de la ville pour trouver refuge au pied des ruines du Phare.

Concernant la défense du port, les descriptions des voyageurs occidentaux ne concordent pas toutes entre elles. Piloti, malgré son sens du détail, ne mentionne nulle part un quelconque château comme clé du dispositif défensif d'Alexandrie. En revanche, les voyageurs qui ont visité Alexandrie à partir des années 1480 cachent difficilement leur émerveillement devant la robustesse du fort que le sultan Qāyṭbāy a érigé à l'entrée du nouveau port, sur l'emplacement du Phare antique dont Ibn-Baṭṭūṭa avait admiré les ruines au milieu du XIV^e siècle³¹. Ghistele n'a pas pu s'en approcher car, nous dit-il, il est interdit aux visiteurs occidentaux de s'aventurer au-delà du «vieux château» en direction de la mer³². Le Franciscain, Paulus Walther a pourtant tenté cette incursion. Mal lui en prit car il s'est fait refouler à coup de pierres³³.

La description du fort présente moins de difficultés. Ghistele, Breydenbach et Fabri insistent sur son architecture de style européen³⁴. Alors que le premier lui trouve des similitudes avec le style flamand, les deux derniers précisent que son donjon «d'une hauteur extraordinaire» est l'œuvre d'un renégat allemand d'Oppenheim³⁵. Ghistele ajoute qu'il est gardé par «un capitaine propre qui ne dépend pas du seigneur de la ville.» Cette indépendance vis-à-vis du gouverneur d'Alexandrie se perpétue à l'époque ottomane³⁶.

Ce fort, qui dans l'imaginaire des voyageurs n'est que le prolongement historique du Phare des Ptolémées est entouré de nombreuses légendes. Les sources orientales mentionnent le miroir placé à son sommet servant à repérer et à incendier les navires byzantins qui

Georges Sanguin (Le Caire 1974), 22, 41. Voir aussi Samuel Kiechel, *Voyages en Egypte pendant les années 1587-1588*, éd. et trad. Serge Sauneron (Le Caire, 1972), 20-21.

³¹ Ghistele, *Voyage en Egypte*, 124: «le sultan actuel [Qāyṭbāy] a fait construire un nouveau et beau château, appelé 'Le Ferrelon'.» Fabri le nomme Faregfan et en attribue la construction à Jules César (Fabri, 718). C'est en effet sur le site de l'ancien Phare qu'il s'élève.

³² Ghistele, *ibid.*, 124.

³³ Walther, *Itinerarium*, 248.

³⁴ Ghistele, *ibid.*, 124; Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 718; Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes*, 245.

³⁵ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 718; Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes*, 245.

³⁶ Villamont, *Voyages en Egypte des années 1589, 1590 et 1591*, éd. Carla Burri et Serge Sauneron (Le Caire, 1971), 234.

voudraient tenter une action hostile contre le port³⁷. Les sources occidentales sont, quant à elles, muettes sur ce point, à l'exception du récit du chevalier allemand Johann Schiltberger³⁸. En revanche, il faut attendre l'époque moderne pour que soit mentionné un deuxième château, appelé parfois le « Petit Pharillon », en face du fort de Qāyrbāy, sur l'autre bras de la baie qui clôt le Nouveau Port³⁹.

Une fois que le bateau qui les transporte a jeté l'ancre dans le port qui lui est destiné, les voyageurs sont conduits vers la Porte de la Mer pour y être inspectés par les officiers de la douane.

A TERRE : CONTRÔLES, FOUILLES ET VEXATIONS

Fitzsimon décrit comment, lui et les « pauvres pèlerins » de son groupe, furent accueillis, aux portes de la ville, par une foule en furie⁴⁰. Sarrasins et « renégats »—c'est-à-dire des fonctionnaires et des militaires mamelouks—s'unissent pour les maltraiter. Aux jets de pierres se mêlent injures et blasphèmes. Certains crachent même sur les livres saints que les pèlerins portent sur eux. Mais, surtout, on lance contre eux l'accusation d'espionnage.

Au milieu des années 1330, la situation semble se durcir encore : ni Guillaume de Boldensele (1334), ni le chanoine augustin Jacopo da Verona (1335), ni Ludolph von Südheim (1336) n'ont pu se rendre à Alexandrie. Jacopo da Verona nous explique que c'est en raison de « rumeurs d'un passage » imminent, c'est-à-dire d'une croisade. Les pèlerins et les chrétiens italiens (très certainement des marchands)

³⁷ Voir, par exemple, les récits d'Ibn al-Faqīh, *Abrégé du livre des pays*, éd. Henri Massé (= *Bibliotheca geographorum arabicorum*, 3), (Damas, 1974), 89 ; Al-Muqadasi, « L'Égypte vue par un géographe arabe du IV/X^e siècle : Al-Muqaddasi », éd. et trad. André Miquel, *Annales islamologiques* 11 (Damas, 1972), 135 et de Nasir-i Khusraw, *Sefer nameh : relation du voyage de Nassiri Khosrau en Syrie, en Palestine, en Égypte, en Arabie et en Perse, pendant les années de l'hégire 437-444 (1035-1042)*, éd. et trad. Charles Scheffer (Paris : E. Leroux, 1881), 119-120.

³⁸ Johann Schiltberger, *The Bondage and travels of Johann Schiltberger, a native of Bavaria, in Europe, Asia and Africa, 1396-1427*, éd. et trad. J. Buchan-Teller (Londres, 1879), 62-64. Le caractère atypique du récit de Schiltberger s'explique par la carrière exceptionnelle de son auteur, voyageur « malgré-lui » fait prisonnier à la bataille de Nicopolis (1396), puis passé successivement au service de Bayazed et de Timur.

³⁹ Ce deuxième fort est abondamment mentionné par les voyageurs de l'époque ottomane. Cf. Lichtenstein, 24 ; Kiechel, *Voyages en Égypte*, 29-30 ; Villamont, *Voyages en Égypte*, 234 ; Brémond, *Voyage en Égypte*, 22 et Johann Michael Wansleben, *The Present State of Egypt* (1678, réédition en fac-simile, 1972), 115.

⁴⁰ Fitzsimon, « Le voyage de Symon Semeonis », 973.

présents au Caire, soupçonnés d'être des «*exploratores*», sont expulsés de la ville⁴¹. Lui et son groupe sont ainsi contraints d'infléchir leur itinéraire vers Damiette dont l'importance stratégique est secondaire depuis qu'elle a perdu ses remparts⁴². Alors que les puissances chrétiennes rassemblent des navires dans le Nègrepont (1334) et que Benoît XII fait prêcher la croisade, tout Européen présent en Egypte est considéré comme un espion potentiel.

Dans ce contexte, l'accès à Alexandrie «entrée et issue» du Caire et de l'Egypte, selon l'expression de Piloti, fait logiquement l'objet de nombreuses restrictions⁴³. Il serait intéressant de savoir ce qu'il en est immédiatement après l'expédition de Pierre de Lusignan de 1365, ou après le coup de main du maréchal de Boucicaut en 1403 mais, hélas, les récits de voyage occidentaux sont peu disserts sur ce point.

Après la reprise des relations diplomatiques entre Venise et le Caire et la levée de l'embargo par la papauté (1345), le flux régulier des pèlerins vers Jérusalem connaît un nouveau regain. Le pouvoir mamelouk ne renonce pas pour autant à les surveiller de près. Dans certains cas, les mesures anti-espionnage sont d'une modernité étonnante. Le Frère Mineur Niccolò da Poggibonsi, par exemple, mentionne comment les pèlerins, à leur arrivée au port de Jaffa sont «fichés» par les agents de l'émir de la ville qui prennent soin d'enregistrer leur taille, leur couleur de peau et d'autres particularités de leur constitution physique afin d'établir la fiche signalétique de chacun d'entre eux⁴⁴.

Au début du XV^e siècle, du fait de l'intensification de la piraterie catalane en Méditerranée orientale, certains visiteurs occidentaux ont dû encourir cette accusation. Le chevalier castillan Pero Tafur relate, à cet égard, une mésaventure dont il a été victime à Damiette, en 1438. Accusé par les habitants de la ville d'être un Catalan (c'est-à-dire en l'occurrence un pirate), il ne doit son salut qu'à deux Mamelouks «*gentil hombres*» qui témoignent qu'il est en réalité Castillan. Aussitôt la foule se tranquillise car, poursuit Tafur, «*toda cosa que dizen los*

⁴¹ Jacopo da Verona, *Liber peregrinationis di Jacopo da Verona*, éd. Ugo Monneret de Villard (Rome, 1950), 85.

⁴² Ibidem, «*Relinquens Alexandriam ad manum sinistram ad quam libenter ivissem.*»

⁴³ Piloti, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 27.

⁴⁴ Niccolò da Poggibonsi, *A Voyage beyond the Sea (1346-1350)*, éd. et trad. Eugene Hoade et Theophilus Bellorini (Jérusalem, 1945), 6.

turcos es aprovado por verdad» [tout ce que disent les Turcs est tenu pour vrai]⁴⁵.

Pourtant, les motifs sécuritaires ne sont pas les seuls à dicter les mesures drastiques prises à l'encontre des pèlerins. Dans les années 1480, le voyageur flamand Joos van Ghistele explique que c'est «l'avidité du seigneur de l'endroit», (l'émir d'Alexandrie et par extension le sultan) qui en est la cause⁴⁶. Se plaignant du caractère humiliant des fouilles au corps pratiquées à la porte de la douane, Paulus Walther précise, néanmoins que les douaniers ne sont intéressés que par les ducats, car ils ne prélèvent rien sur les autres monnaies⁴⁷. On est ici bien loin de la hantise sécuritaire du début du XIV^e siècle!

Faisant foi du témoignage de son Truchement, Félix Fabri ajoute que ces brimades sont un lointain héritage de l'Athènes antique⁴⁸, et que le sort des voyageurs aurait été pire s'ils avaient été des marchands: «Si nous avions été des commerçants nous n'en serions pas sortis ainsi; ils les dépouillent en effet jusqu'à la peau, et ce qui est inhumain, et honteux même à dire, ils cherchent jusque dans le derrière, dans la bouche et les oreilles, l'or et les pierres précieuses qui pourraient y être cachés⁴⁹.»

Adorno n'est pas de cet avis. Selon lui, s'il a pu passer si aisément le contrôle aux portes de la ville, c'est que les gardes l'ont confondu avec un marchand génois⁵⁰. Mais les autorités mameloukes ne sont pas dupes. Lui et ses compagnons sont découverts et doivent payer une amende sévère dont il ne nous précise pas le montant exact⁵¹. Ghistele, est plus riche en détails: le Truchement exige des fraudeurs de payer cinq ducats mais après d'âpres négociations, il consent à leur remettre, sur ces cinq ducats, la part qui devrait revenir au sultan et fait descendre le prix à deux ducats⁵². Ces cinq ducats correspondent très

⁴⁵ Tafur, *Andanças e viajes de un hidalgo español (Pero Tafur, 1436-39)*, éd. José Vivés (Barcelona, 1947), 256.

⁴⁶ Ghistele, *Voyage en Egypte*, 112-13.

⁴⁷ Walther, *Itinerarium*, 240: «Et vocaverunt primum personas, unum post alium, intra portas, et deposuerunt eis superiora vestimenta, et diligenter querebant a capite usque ad anus culi ducatos et aurum, de alis monetis nihil recipient.»

⁴⁸ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 663-64.

⁴⁹ Fabri, *ibid.*, 666. La ressemblance avec le texte de Walther est frappante!

⁵⁰ Anselme Adorno, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470-1471)*, éd. et trad. Jacques Heers et Georgette De Groër (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1978), 173.

⁵¹ Adorno, *ibid.*, 172-73: «pro salvo conducto quod nobis daturus esset multas pecunias petiit.»

⁵² Ghistele, *Voyage en Egypte*, 115-116.

vraisemblablement au prix d'un sauf-conduit de pèlerin⁵³. Arnold von Harff, qui s'était fait passer pour le commis d'un marchand vénitien de Damas, est plus chanceux. Il parvient à cacher sa condition de pèlerin jusqu'au bout. Mais, s'il avait été pris à Alexandrie, nous dit-il, il aurait « cessé d'être dans les bonnes grâces du seigneur (l'émir) à cause de ce subterfuge; » au Caire, cela lui aurait coûté la vie⁵⁴.

Si tant de voyageurs usurpent la condition de marchands, c'est parce que le sauf-conduit des marchands coûte moins cher que celui des simples pèlerins⁵⁵. A la fin du règne de Qāyṭbāy, il s'élèverait à deux ducats⁵⁶. Pour le sauf-conduit des pèlerins, les témoignages ne concordent pas tous. Fabri relate que son Truchement, homme juste et inflexible exige de chaque pèlerin treize ducats⁵⁷. Ces derniers protestent devant une somme qu'ils jugent inique. De mémoire de pèlerins argument-ils, il n'a jamais été exigé plus de six ducats, ce qui concorde *grosso modo* avec les cinq ducats de Ghistele⁵⁸. Mais le Truchement reste inflexible et oppose à la tradition orale des pèlerins occidentaux, le droit écrit de ses registres et il semble qu'à la fin ce soit lui qui ait obtenu gain de cause⁵⁹. Fabri s'en tire bien toutefois puisqu'en marchandant un peu, il parvient à en être exempté en considération de sa condition cléricale⁶⁰. (fig. 3)

Qu'ils soient marchands ou pèlerins, les visiteurs occidentaux sont étroitement surveillés au point d'être parfois l'objet de mesure d'enfermement. Fréquemment accusée de collusion avec l'ennemi, la population chrétienne, tant indigène qu'occidentale, aurait été soumise à une certaine réclusion, au moins depuis le sultanat de Qālāwūn, à la fin du XIII^e siècle⁶¹. Fabri précise que les portes du funduq des Catalans, où logent les pèlerins, sont closes chaque nuit par les soins des musulmans⁶². Mais, Piloti, qui a vécu vingt ans à Alexandrie, indique que

⁵³ On retrouve cette proportion 3/5 pour le sultan et 2/5 pour les autorités locales dans les amendes judiciaires décrites par Harff, « Le pèlerinage », 103 : « Chacun des prisonniers doit donner deux médins au gardien et trois médins au Sultan. »

⁵⁴ Harff, « Le pèlerinage », 71, 79.

⁵⁵ C'est le cas d'Anselme Adorno, de Joos van Ghistele et d'Arnold von Harff.

⁵⁶ Ghistele, *Voyage en Egypte*, 115-16; Harff, « Le pèlerinage », 71.

⁵⁷ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 673.

⁵⁸ Cf. *supra*, note 52.

⁵⁹ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 683.

⁶⁰ Cf. Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 679.

⁶¹ Olivia-Remie Constable, *Housing the stranger in the Mediterranean world: lodging, trade, and travel in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2003), 277.

⁶² Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 674.

cette mesure ne s'applique qu'aux chrétiens occidentaux⁶³. C'est aussi l'opinion de Frescobaldi qui écrit que tous les chrétiens Francs sont enfermés, à l'heure de la prière dans une pièce nommée *cane* alors que les autres chrétiens doivent rester chez eux⁶⁴.

Le chevalier allemand Johann Schiltberger, présent en Egypte en 1422 pour les noces du sultan Barsbāy, y voit une mesure préventive contre un possible coup de main de la part des puissances chrétiennes : « À l'heure des vêpres, à Alexandrie, les étrangers sont obligés de rentrer dans leurs magasins [les funduqs] et de ne plus se promener dans la ville ; c'est absolument interdit. Un païen vient verrouiller les magasins et emporte les clés avec lui jusqu'au lendemain matin, où il les rouvre à nouveau. Ils agissent ainsi de peur que les étrangers ne s'emparent de la ville, comme le roi de Chypre le fit jadis⁶⁵. »

Pour Schiltberger, c'est la sécurité du port d'Alexandrie qui motive principalement une telle mesure. Mais la plupart du temps, c'est pour des raisons fiscales que les Occidentaux sont reclus de force dans les funduqs. Ainsi, le groupe de Félix Fabri est-il contraint de rester entre les murs du funduq des Catalans parce qu'il refuse de payer au Truchement le prix d'un sauf conduit qu'il juge exorbitant⁶⁶. Qu'il s'agisse ou non d'une réclusion massive, force est de constater les limites à la liberté de mouvement auxquelles sont soumis les voyageurs occidentaux pendant leur séjour à Alexandrie.

Une fois entré en ville, le Truchement énumère, à l'intention du groupe de Fabri, les lieux qu'il leur est défendu de visiter : les venelles, les ruines, la colline surplombant la ville servant au gué. De plus, interdiction leur est faite de sortir ou d'entrer par une autre porte que la Porte de la Mer⁶⁷. Toutes ces mesures ont pour objet, selon Fabri, la défense du port, sans cesse à la merci d'une attaque des puissances chrétiennes⁶⁸.

⁶³ Piloti, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 110.

⁶⁴ Frescobaldi, « *Nel Nome di Dio facemmo vela* », 136. Il faut vraisemblablement lire *cave* : la confusion entre le 'n' et le 'v' est fréquente dans les manuscrits, à moins qu'il ne s'agisse d'une retranscription de *khan*.

⁶⁵ Johan Schiltberger, *The Bondage and travels of Johann Schiltberger, a native of Bavaria, in Europe, Asia and Africa, 1396–1427*, éd. et trad. J. Buchan-Tefler (London : Hakluyt Society, 1879), 62. Traduction de l'auteur.

⁶⁶ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 667. Pour la même raison, Fitzsimon est bloqué cinq jours durant dans le funduq des Marseillais, cf. Fitzsimon, « Le voyage de Symon Semeonis », 973.

⁶⁷ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 684.

⁶⁸ Fabri, *ibid.*, 724–25.

Fitzsimon est un des premiers à avoir identifié les collines d'Alexandrie mais sans les localiser précisément. Il s'agirait de collines sablonneuses sur lesquelles grimpent les habitants pour y chercher l'air frais ou y jouir de la vue⁶⁹. Les auteurs postérieurs insistent sur leur origine artificielle⁷⁰. Lannoy ajoute qu'elles sont situées « dedens la fermeté » c'est-à-dire à l'intérieur des murs⁷¹. La plus haute, à l'ouest, près des remparts, du côté du vieux port, est surmontée d'une « tourette de garde », « grêle et quarré [sic] »⁷² nettement visible sur une représentation datant de 1472⁷³. L'autre, proche de la porte du Caire, moins élevée mais plus étendue, serait couronnée d'une mosquée⁷⁴. La situation était relativement semblable trente ans plus tôt, lors du passage de Martoni qui précise qu'elles sont distantes de deux milles⁷⁵. Il n'est pas certain qu'elles soient toutes deux fortifiées avant l'époque ottomane⁷⁶, mais, leur rôle de point d'observation pour la surveillance maritime est souligné par d'autres voyageurs⁷⁷. Pour cette raison, interdiction est faite aux voyageurs occidentaux de s'en approcher⁷⁸.

Principal ouvrage défensif, les murs l'enceinte d'Alexandrie sont également interdits aux voyageurs occidentaux. Il faut cependant admettre qu'une telle interdiction ne devait pas être toujours rigoureusement observée puisque Fabri découvre une petite porte entre les deux enceintes qui lui permet de monter sur les remparts extérieurs⁷⁹.

⁶⁹ Fitzsimon, « Le voyage de Symon Semeonis », 977.

⁷⁰ Simone Sigoli, *Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine and Syria in 1384*, éd. et trad. Eugene Hoade et Theophilus Bellorini (Jérusalem, 1948), 163 ; Martoni, « Relation de pèlerinage », 589 ; Adorno, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno*, 163 ; Ghiste, *Voyage en Egypte*, 122 ; Harff, « Le pèlerinage », 73. Voir aussi, pour la période postérieure, Pierre Belon du Mans, *Les observations de Pierre Belon du Mans de plusieurs singularités et choses mémorables, trouvées en Grèce, Turquie, Judée, Egypte, Arabie et autres pays étrangers* (1553), éd. Alexandra Merle (Paris, 2001), 270.

⁷¹ Lannoy, *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy*, 100.

⁷² Ibidem.

⁷³ Carte d'Alexandrie d'Ugo Comminelli (1472) insérée dans le *Codex Urbinat*, Librairie du Vatican. Voir l'article de David Jacoby dans ce volume.

⁷⁴ Cela est manifeste sur la carte de Bellin (1764).

⁷⁵ Martoni, « Relation de pèlerinage », 589. En réalité, elles ne sont d'instants d'un mille seulement (1,6 km).

⁷⁶ Brémond, *Voyage en Egypte*, 20–21 ; Edward-William Lane, *Description of Egypt*, éd. Jason Thompson (Le Caire, 2000), 3.

⁷⁷ Martoni, « Relation de pèlerinage », 589 ; Adorno, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno*, 163 ; Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes*, 242 et Ghiste, *Voyage en Egypte*, 124.

⁷⁸ Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 724 ; Ghiste, *Voyage en Egypte*, 122 ; Harff, « Le pèlerinage », 72. Ghiste et Harff s'inspirent manifestement du texte de Fabri.

⁷⁹ Fabri, *ibid.*, 660.

ALEXANDRIE, UNE VILLE EN DÉCLIN

C'est sur ces murailles et ces collines que tombe en premier le regard du voyageur entrant à Alexandrie par la mer. La double enceinte qui enferme la majeure partie de l'antique Alexandrie suscite l'admiration de tous, tant par sa grandeur que par sa solidité⁸⁰. Certains auteurs se risquent même à en mesurer la circonférence. Les estimations varient de 4 à 6 milles⁸¹. Devant de tels chiffres, l'étonnement du voyageur occidental est d'autant plus grand qu'il n'aura plus l'occasion, au cours de son périple en Egypte et en Palestine, de contempler une ville aussi bien fortifiée.

Mais, l'impression est trompeuse : à la stupéfaction initiale fait place la déception. Les murailles d'Alexandrie ne renferment en effet qu'un monceau de ruines. « Nous demeurâmes stupéfaits, nous étonnant que des murailles si solides et si belles n'entourassent qu'une cité tellement en ruines », se lamente Fabri, dans les années 1480⁸². Walther précise que la moitié de la ville est dépeuplée. Ghistele, à la même époque, va même jusqu'à dire qu'il n'y a pas une dizaine de maisons tenant debout à l'intérieur des murs. Le délabrement de la ville est complet sauf autour de la rue du bazar Saint-Marc et le long des artères menant aux portes de la ville⁸³. Plus d'un demi-siècle plus tôt, Piloti dresse le même bilan : « Alexandrie, [...] est dishabitée et habandonnée, nonobstant qu'elle est belle cité et de belles habitations laborées⁸⁴. » Cette impression de contraction urbaine est encore clairement visible sur les vues d'Alexandrie du XVI^e siècle, comme celle de Braun et Hogenberg. A part quelques îlots construits le long de l'enceinte nord, au sud d'une ligne reliant les deux collines, ce ne sont que colonnes renversées et ruines antiques (fig. 4).

C'est ce dont le visiteur européen doit se contenter. Dans les récits de voyages occidentaux de la fin du Moyen Age, Alexandrie, à la

⁸⁰ Jacopo da Verona, 66 : « In tota terra Egipti sunt iste sole municiones primo Alexandria, supra mare scita, bene munita et portis et turribus firmata. »

⁸¹ Lannoy, *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy*, 107 (6 milles); Sigoli, *Visit to the Holy Places*, 161 (4 milles).

⁸² Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 665. Voir aussi Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes*, 239, Walther, *Itinerarium*, 241 : « Item Alexandria [...] habens muros altos [...] que reddunt murum et civitatem pulcherrimam, portas fortissimas et pretiosas, bene munitas, muscheas pulchras cum turribus altissimis. Interius vero civitas est destructa et desolata, et quotidie cadit domus supra domum [...] »

⁸³ Ghistele, *Voyage en Egypte*, 120.

⁸⁴ Piloti, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 92.

différence du Caire qui peut se prévaloir de la splendeur de ses monuments musulmans, ne vit que par le souvenir de son passé glorieux. On retrouve le même *topos* chez des auteurs orientaux antérieurs tel Ibn Hawqal, écrivain arabe de Haute Mésopotamie écrivant au milieu du X^e siècle :

On y voit des antiquités bien apparentes et des monuments authentiques de ces anciens habitants, [...]. Ce sont de gros blocs de pierre, preuves tangibles de civilisation : il y a là d'immenses colonnes et toutes sortes de dalles de marbre, dont une seule ne peut être remuée que par des milliers de travailleurs, et qui sont hissées entre ciel et terre à une hauteur de cent coudées, chaque bloc reposant sur les chapiteaux des colonnes. [...] Le tout est décoré avec des nuances étonnantes et des couleurs prodigieuses. Si l'on pouvait interroger ces débris sur ceux qui les construits et habités, on les entendrait raconter à leur sujet des histoires impressionnantes⁸⁵. »

Le cartouche, en haut de la vue du port d'Alexandrie par Braun et Hogenberg (1575) propose, à l'honnête homme de la fin de la Renaissance, une sorte de résumé des opinions des visiteurs occidentaux élaboré entre le XIV^e et le XV^e siècle :

ALEXANDRIA, vetustissimum Aegypti emporium, Amplissima civitas, ab Alexandro Magno condita, muris, turribus et propugnaculis ea forma, qua heic [sic] depicta videtur, ante Christi adventum, Annis CCC.XX. constructa fuit, magnificia olim, et nunc quoque bene munita conspicitur, sed intra moenia ruinis, et ruderibus plena, Magnitudine Lutetiae Parisiorum respondet. (Fig. 5)

A côté de l'antiquité du grand port fondé par Alexandre le Grand, son caractère inexpugnable, mis en valeur dans le cartouche est rappelé sur la gravure par les soins que l'artiste a mis à dessiner les innombrables tours rythmant l'immense enceinte de la ville. Au milieu de la légende, toutefois, l'adverbe *olim* (jadis) vient tirer le spectateur de sa contemplation de l'histoire prestigieuse d'Alexandrie pour lui rappeler que, malgré le bon état de ses remparts, l'intérieur de la ville n'est plus que ruines et décombres.

De quand date une telle déchéance urbaine ? Plusieurs auteurs incriminent les assauts répétés qu'Alexandrie a dû subir au cours de son histoire. Le souvenir du dernier, par Pierre de Lusignan en 1365 est

⁸⁵ Ibn Hawkal, *La configuration de la Terre*, éd. et trad. Johannes Hendrik Kramers et Gaston Wiet, (Paris, 2001), 1:148.

encore frais dans les mémoires, un siècle plus tard⁸⁶. Pourquoi donc Sigoli, vingt ans après la croisade chypriote, voit-il dans Alexandrie une ville populeuse et commerciale dans laquelle abondent tous types de produits de luxe?⁸⁷ Le sac de la ville en 1365 ne serait-il donc qu'un épisode de plus dans la décadence irréversible du grand port égyptien ?

La cause de cette décadence urbaine serait donc à rechercher non pas dans les aléas de l'histoire mais, selon Piloti, dans « la mal seogorie et mavaï gouverne [des] seigneurs du Cayre⁸⁸. » On reconnaît ici sa verve de polémiste. Son zèle pour la croisade lui fait, en quelque sorte, mettre de côté sa grande intelligence du système de gouvernement mamelouk acquise par une longue expérience du terrain. Il ne reste plus aux princes chrétiens qu'à cueillir ce fruit mûr, que tant de mauvaise volonté de la part de l'administration mamelouke semble leur offrir. Ces derniers pourront alors, répondre aux vœux de Piloti, de la « conquêter, et la habiter et la remettre à son premier estat⁸⁹. » Cela sera d'autant plus facile, poursuit notre propagandiste, que la population musulmane déçue par les mensonges de l'islam ne tarderait pas à se convertir au catholicisme⁹⁰.

Au moment de mettre ses souvenirs par écrit, l'auteur laisse libre cours à sa frustration de n'avoir pas pu visiter Alexandrie à son gré. Le témoignage d'Anselme Adorno conseillant à son lecteur de quitter au plus tôt Alexandrie et ses habitants maudits l'illustre particulièrement bien⁹¹. Comme pour se venger des tracasseries qu'il y a subies, l'auteur procède à une *damnatio memoriae* d'Alexandrie et, plus généralement de tous les « infidèles » qu'il y a croisés. Incapable de répondre sur place aux humiliations, il s'empresse, une fois rentré chez lui, de recueillir

⁸⁶ Adorno, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno*, 163 : « Elle a récemment encore été détruite et rasée par le roi de Chypre. » Voir aussi Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte*, 725 qui date l'expédition de 1231.

⁸⁷ Sigoli, *Visit to the Holy Places*, 161.

⁸⁸ Piloti, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 192.

⁸⁹ Piloti, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, 92.

⁹⁰ Piloti, *ibid.*, 185-86. L'idée d'une crise de confiance des musulmans dans leur religion est déjà présente chez Jacopo da Verona, un siècle et demi plus tôt : « tamen in veritate ego locutus fui cum plurimis Saracenis sapientibus de lege Mahometi qui multum trufantur de ipsa lege et si esset pulcrum audire de gestis illius baratoris Mahometi ego multa dicta scripsissem sed quia trufe sunt. » Voir aussi Harff, « Le pèlerinage », 101 : « on pourrait convertir ces gens en peu de temps s'il était permis d'y prêcher, car ils sont très crédules. »

⁹¹ Adorno, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno*, 173.

toutes les légendes antimusulmanes qui entourent les lieux saints de la ville.

Le Franciscain italien Niccolò da Poggibonsi, présent à Alexandrie au milieu du XIV^e siècle, recueille un fait illustrant la lutte entre chrétiens et musulmans pour le contrôle des Lieux Saints. La pierre de la décapitation de saint Jean-Baptiste, provenant de Sébaste en Samarie, posséderait une vertu miraculeuse qui ferait qu'aucun Sarrasin ne puisse s'y asseoir sans être recouvert de bêtes sauvages jaillissant d'en dessous⁹².

Ce sanctuaire, écrit le pèlerin anglais Thomas Brygg, est appelé communément *capella S. Johannis de Cophinis* à cause des paniers qu'y fabriquent les Sarrasins. Ces derniers seraient contraints de verser chaque jour une partie de leurs recettes pour l'entretien du luminaire sans quoi les murs de l'église s'effondreraient sur eux et détruiraient leur production⁹³.

Des prodiges semblables concerneraient également l'église Saint-Sabba, aux dires de Jean Thenaud qui visite Alexandrie peu avant sa conquête par les Ottomans : « Les Sarrazins n'ont sceu [la] prophaner, car ilz ont voulu faire souvent boucherie d'icelle; mais, en voulant détailler les chairs, ilz se coupoient bras, mains, ou se coupoient les gorges et ventres, comme enragez et demoniaques. Puis, l'ont voulu faire musquete; mais ceulx qui montoient és tours pour crier à l'oration se gettoit du hault en bas. *Item*: quant l'ont voulu ruiner, n'ont peu pour plusieurs prodiges qui s'apparoissoient⁹⁴. »

Alors qu'au Caire et à Fustât, le pèlerin occidental cache difficilement son admiration devant la magnificence des lieux saints de l'islam; à Alexandrie, son récit prend un tour volontiers agressif à l'égard de la religion de ceux qu'il considère comme les occupants illégitimes d'une ville anciennement chrétienne.

⁹² Poggibonsi, *A Voyage beyond the Sea*, 85.

⁹³ Thomas Brygg, *Western Pilgrims: the Itineraries of Fr. Simon Fitzsimons (1322–23), a certain Englishman (1344–45), Thomas Brygg (1392), and Notes on other Authors and Pilgrims*, éd. Eugene Hoade (Jérusalem, 1952), 78.

⁹⁴ Thenaud, *Le voyage d'outremer*, 26–27. Thenaud confond, en fait très certainement, ce sanctuaire avec l'église Saint-Sabba de la Saint-Jean d'Acre croisée, théâtre des affrontements entre Guelfes et Gibelins, de 1259 à 1267 généralement nommés « guerre de Saint Sabas. »

CONCLUSION

L'originalité des récits des voyageurs européens est de mettre l'accent sur des aspects prosaïques négligés par les auteurs orientaux. Les auteurs occidentaux sont avant tout des voyageurs attentifs aux distances, aux conditions d'hébergement ou aux monnaies locales qu'ils comparent avec les devises de leurs pays et dont ils ont besoin pour leurs nombreuses dépenses: frais de pension, honoraires du Truchement, sauf-conduit, pourboires et « courtoisies » en tout genre.

De même, leur séjour dans les funduqs les met en contact direct avec des marchands européens qui leur fournissent une information de première main sur la situation commerciale et diplomatique des puissances occidentales à Alexandrie. Parcequ'ils séjournent généralement dans un autre funduq que celui de Venise, les pèlerins apportent, dans leurs récits, un éclairage intéressant sur les concurrents de la Sérénissime tels que les Génois et les sujets du roi d'Aragon ou du roi de France.

Mais surtout, étant directement visés par les mesures sécuritaires prises à leur rencontre par les autorités mameloukes, ils nous renseignent non seulement sur le contenu et l'évolution de celles-ci mais également sur la façon dont elles sont ou non effectivement appliquées. On peut distinguer, à cet égard, quelques temps forts au cours de la période qui nous intéresse.

De la chute de Saint-Jean d'Acre (1291) au rétablissement des relations avec l'empire mamelouk (1345), les pèlerins, pour la plupart des clercs, empruntent le chemin de la Terre Sainte à la fois par dévotion et pour remplir une mission religieuse ou diplomatique plus ou moins officielle. Leur statut mal défini et la durée parfois prolongée de leur séjour les rendent suspects aux yeux de la puissance mamelouke qui n'hésite pas, comme dans les années 1330, à prendre des mesures d'expulsion contre eux.

Les conséquences démographiques de la Peste Noire suivies de celles diplomatiques de l'expédition de Pierre 1^{er} de Lusignan en 1365, retardent la reprise du pèlerinage de Jérusalem. Il faut attendre les années 1380 pour assister à une inflation considérable du nombre de pèlerins et à une diversification de leur profil. C'est à ce moment que les mesures de surveillance de la population pèlerine semblent prendre leur forme définitive: ségrégation des navires de pèlerins dans le port oriental, inspection à bord, enregistrement des pèlerins et de la marchandise, démâtage des navires, fouilles minutieuses aux portes

de la ville et prise en charge par un consul spécialisé (généralement le consul de Narbonne au XIV^e siècle, puis celui des Catalans, à la fin du XV^e siècle).

Après la crise démographique que traverse l'Égypte au début du XV^e siècle et la reprise des hostilités avec l'Occident (expédition de Boucicaud) qui aboutit à la fermeture temporaire du funduq de Gènes, le sultanat de Barsbāy (1422–1438) inaugure une phase de relèvement partiel, en même temps qu'une reprise des contacts diplomatiques avec l'Occident. C'est dans ce cadre qu'il faut situer les ambassades officielles de Ghillebert de Lannoy (1422) et de Pero Tafur (1435–38), envoyés respectivement par le duc de Bourgogne et le roi de Chypre. Mais la tension demeure. Elle se traduit par une série de mesures vexatoires à l'encontre des marchands occidentaux.

Le sultanat de Qāyṭbāy (1468–1496) coïncide avec un nouvel et éphémère âge d'or du pèlerinage d'outremer. Les récits de voyages occidentaux se multiplient. Pour un seul pèlerinage, nous disposons ainsi de plusieurs témoignages qui, plutôt que de se contredire, semblent au contraire concorder pour nous donner un aperçu relativement complet et cohérent des mesures de surveillance mises en place par les autorités alexandrines. Au-delà de leur caractère arbitraire, les vexations qu'ont à subir les pèlerins et les marchands répondent à des considérations plus financières que sécuritaires et sont souvent négociables. Au crépuscule de la dynastie circassienne, le cérémonial humiliant en vigueur sous les Mamelouks bahrides de la réception des pèlerins aux portes de la ville, sous les quolibets d'une population en furie, n'est plus que l'ombre de lui-même.

Les troubles dynastiques au Caire de la fin du XV^e siècle auxquelles vient se s'ajouter la critique humaniste du pèlerinage comme œuvre pie dissuadent nombre d'Occidentaux de prendre le chemin des Lieux Saints. Il ne reste plus alors que quelques marchands et diplomates pour fréquenter le port d'Alexandrie. Soucieux de ménager ses alliances avec l'Occident contre l'empire ottoman, le pouvoir mamelouk s'empresse de traiter ces voyageurs de marque avec tous les égards.

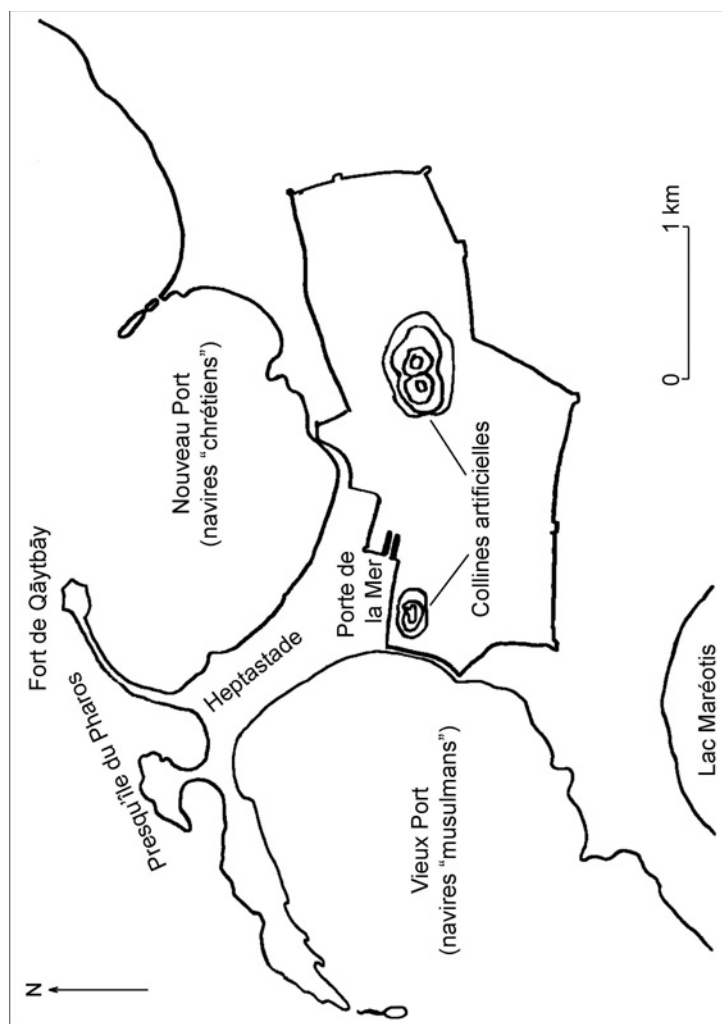


Figure 1: *Le port d'Alexandrie à la fin du XV^e siècle (schéma de l'auteur)*



Figure 2: *Braun et Hogenberg, 1575. Vue du port occidental d’Alexandrie. Détail du port occidental.* © « The Jewish National & University Library, Shapell Family Digitization Project, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dept. of Geography, Historic Cities Project. »

	Séjour	Logement	Prix de la pension	Sauf-conduit et douane
Fitzsimon	5 jours	Consul des Marseillais. A-t-il pu sortir en ville ?		Gratuit pour les Frères Mineurs ?
Poggibonsi		Près d’une église jacobite		
Frescobaldi, Gucci, Sigoli	8 jours	Chez le « consul des Français et des pèlerins »	1 ducat	1 ducat/pers + 2% sur les devises
Anglure	8 jours	« Consul de Narbonne et des pèlerins »		
Brygg	10 jours		2 ducats/pers + 4 ducats forfaitaires	4 ducats (honoraires du truchement); 1 ducat (forfaitaire?) pour les gardiens du port.
Adorno	12 jours	Funduq des Génois ? (A. se fait passer pour un marchand génois).		2 ducats + amende (<i>pecunias multas</i>)
Ghistele	?	Funduq des Vénitiens	Théoriquement 1 ducat/ sem. (gratis pour lui)	Marchands : 2 ducats Pèlerins : 5 ducats
Fabri, Breydenbach, Walther	22 jours	Funduq des Catalans.	6 ducats (Fabri et Walther : gratis)	Clerc : exempté Pèlerins : 13 ducats
Harff	?	Funduq des Vénitiens		2 ducats (marchand)

Figure 3: *Modalités de séjour des pèlerins à Alexandrie*



Figure 4: *Braun et Hogenberg, 1575. Vue générale du port occidental d'Alexandrie.* © «The Jewish National & University Library, Shapell Family Digitization Project, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dept. of Geography, Historic Cities Project.»



Figure 5: Braun et Hogenberg, 1575. *Vue du port occidental d'Alexandrie.* Légende du cartouche. © «The Jewish National & University Library, Shapell Family Digitization Project, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dept. of Geography, Historic Cities Project.»

HISTORICAL NARRATION AND DIGRESSION IN
AL-NUWAIRĪ AL-ISKANDARĀNĪ'S *KITĀB AL-ILMĀM*

David Joseph Wrisley

After his sojourns in Jerusalem and Cyprus, Philippe de Mézières had no doubt learned a considerable amount about the Mediterranean basin and the different peoples of the region: it is a knowledge that permeates his lifetime of writing.¹ The age in which Philippe de Mézières lived and wrote was indeed one marked by considerable exchange and trading along its coastlines, but also by violence and raiding of those same areas, and by an eagerness to depict those raids in both Christian and Islamic historiography—albeit in very different ways for both traditions—as a series of campaigns aimed at a confessional other. Description of that violence is far from being the focal point of Philippe de Mézières' writing, but can be found sacralized and idealized between the lines of his crusading propaganda. Generations of historians of the Crusades have looked to Christian authors, Philippe de Mézières, writing from the Order of the Celestines in Paris, Guillaume de Machaut from Reims, or even Leontios Makhairas from Cyprus, in order to make sense of the events of the 1365 sack of Alexandria. Few have looked, however, to the rich Mamluk textual culture of the very lands where those raids took place to understand in what kind of historical writing that violence was narrated.

Late historian Peter Malcolm Holt of the University of London observed some thirty-five years ago that the modern historiography of the medieval Mediterranean suffers a significant “lack of balance”

¹ See Nicolas Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières, 1327–1405, et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (rept. Geneva, 1976), chs. 4–9; Kiril Petkov, “The Rotten Apple and the Good Apples: Orthodox, Catholics and Turks in Philippe de Mézières' Crusading Propaganda,” *Journal of Medieval History* 23.3 (1997), 255–70; Andrea Tarnowski, “Material Examples: Philippe de Mézières' *Order of the Passion*,” *Yale French Studies* 110 (2006), 163–75; Philippe de Mézières, “Introduction,” *Songe du vieux pèlerin*, ed. Joël Blanchard (Paris, 2008), 9–49; Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, “Philippe de Mézières' Life of Saint Pierre de Thomas at the Crossroads of Late Medieval Hagiography and Crusading Ideology,” *Viator* 40.1 (2009), 223–48.

when it comes to knowledge and use of sources.² Although important work has been done in recent years on Islamic perspectives on the crusades, Holt's observation basically holds true today, despite the fact that these Arabic sources are increasingly published and well known.³ Peter I of Lusignan's campaign against the city of Alexandria is a very good example of such a scholarly imbalance where the focus on the European narrative of crusade singularly overshadows other possible counter-narratives of the same events. As both a military campaign and a spectacular raid of the prosperous Egyptian port city, the sack of Alexandria was heralded in European medieval and pre-modern texts as a grand success against Mamluk power. Some triumphalist national histories continue to celebrate that event even in the twenty-first century. Yet we know that even though Mamluk Alexandria was attacked and pillaged, it was only held for a matter of days, and its sack provoked an extended conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean, culminating in the murders of the political figures on both sides of the conflict, the Mamluk vice sultan and the king of Cyprus. On the whole, the attack seems to have achieved very little and the protagonist of the Alexandrian campaign Peter I remains a quite ambiguous hero. Historians seem split over whether Peter I of Lusignan was a pious ruler bravely carrying the mantle of a tradition of crusader kings, or a fanatical architect of a war-provoking fiasco. His murder in his own bed, and at the hands of his own men, so explicitly portrayed in Guillaume de Machaut's *Prise d'Alixandre*, certainly does not help us view his heroism with sympathy or even clarity.⁴ Given the complexity of the historical moment and the imbalance toward European sources, the Alexandrian expedition is in need of reconsideration, and from a more Mediterranean perspective, not so much to elucidate what "actually" happened in the events of 1365, but rather to understand how

² P. M. Holt, "Introduction," *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of Crusades* (Warminster, 1977), vii. This statement is cited from the introduction to an edited volume of papers given at a seminar in 1975 at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

³ See, for example, Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh, 1999). Although her study is about Islamic perspectives during the period of the Latin kingdoms, she does make a passing mention of al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's *Kitāb al-Ilmām* in the context of anti-Christian measures taken by the Mamluks (417).

⁴ Guillaume de Machaut, *La Prise d'Alixandre*, ed. R. Barton Palmer (New York-London, 2002), ll. 8493-832.

they have been recounted and have accumulated meaning with the passage of time.⁵

The details of such a large project fall beyond the scope of this article. The claims of the various Western protagonists about the importance of 1365 need be compared with the principal Arabic source of Peter of Lusignan's sack of the city of Alexandria in order to elucidate the different approaches to representing and making sense of regional violence of the period. The work, written between 1366–1377 by a chronicler-scribe and long-time resident of Alexandria named al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī, is entitled, *Kitāb al-Ilmām bi-l-a'lām fīmā jarat bihi al-aḥkām wa-l-amūr al-maḡdiyya fī waq'at al-Iskandariyya* (The Book of Gleanings Relating what Occurred in the Events of the Fall of Alexandria, herein *Kitāb al-Ilmām*).⁶ It is a complex, long historical source (some 2600 pages) that was edited in 1968, and, to the best of my knowledge, has not yet been translated into a Western language, either partially or in full. The importance of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* for the age of Philippe de Mézières lies not so much in a demystification of the Western reception of Peter as hero (although it does contain extensive description of the raucous and cruel behavior of the raiding armies that could easily provide evidence for such an analysis) as in serving as an alternative source to the ways that Christian chroniclers, namely Mézières, Machaut, Makhairas and later Italian *remanieurs*, made sense of the event. The *Kitāb al-Ilmām* chronicles the sack of Alexandria and idealizes the bravery of the local people's defense of the city, but as its title suggests, it is much more than just a commemoration of a counter crusade. It uses this extraordinary event as a springboard for exploring many other topics, and, as such, it is bursting with poetry, eyewitness accounts, urban descriptions, and other raw material of interest to the social and cultural historian.

We know that Philippe de Mézières, and the other Western sources of the Alexandria campaign, made quite an effort in consecrating the event as a form of renewed crusade and in celebrating Christian raids on the Egyptian coast as heroic. For the very simple reason that

⁵ Here I use the simple, but elegant, idea of history as “time which has gained sense and meaning” taken from Jörn Rüsen, “Introduction: How to Understand Historical Thinking,” *History: Narration–Interpretation–Orientation* (New York–Oxford, 2005), 2.

⁶ Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī, *Kitāb al-Ilmām bi-l-a'lām fīmā jarat bihi al-aḥkām wa-l-amūr al-maḡdiyya fī waq'at al-Iskandariyya*, ed. Aziz Suryal Atiya, 7 vols. (Hyderabad, 1968–76). An abbreviated version is available: *Waq'at al-Iskandariyya min Kitāb al-Ilmām li-l-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī*, ed. Suhail Zakkar (Damascus, 2008).

it does not narrate a campaign led across the sea or into Christian lands, but rather describes resistance to outside attack, the Arabic text offers a largely different perspective on the events of 1365, as well as an excellent opportunity to shift away from the Eurocentric focus of the historiography. In order to use this source effectively, however, it is important to understand how it is constructed. The Arabic source's description of the sack of the city interpolates metadiegetic text into the main historical narrative using a variety of forms of *amplificatio*.⁷ As such, the Arabic narration of the event is indissociable from its focus on *adab*, the indigenous concept in Arabic for belletristic fields like grammar, poetry and philology. Providing reflections (or gleanings) on what occurred in the attack on Alexandria, the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, as we will see, partially participates in a triumphalist version of cross-confessional strife through the use of forms of heroic poetry (see the last section of this article), but for the most part it is of a very different order than the epic-inflected texts of the Christian writers who recount and celebrate Peter I's actions. Through an elaborate matrix of digressions both about early Islam and more recent fronts of conflict in al-Andalus, combined with graphic depiction of struggle against the besiegers of Alexandria, al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's text brings a plethora of meanings to the events of 1365, and in particular critically evaluates the actions of his own city's inhabitants in the face of the violence, all of which might be used to reassess the historiography of the Cypriot campaigns in the late fourteenth century.

Histories written in European languages about the "late crusades" sometimes make mention of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, although they typically repeat what the editors of the text, Aziz Atiya and Etienne Combe,⁸ have written about it in secondary literature.⁹ Before the publication of the Arabic text of *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, Atiya used it in his 1938 book *The Crusades in the Later Middle Ages* extracting narremes of the

⁷ I am using this term "metadiegetic" to refer to the story within the story, which is linked to the main excursus.

⁸ In particular, see Aziz Suryal Atiya, *A Fourteenth-Century Encyclopedist from Alexandria: A Critical and Analytical Study of al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's "Kitāb al-Ilmām"* (Salt Lake City, 1977). Atiya explains in this essay the genesis of the Arabic edition stemming from his collaboration with Swiss Orientalist Etienne Combe.

⁹ There has not been a comprehensive study of the Cypriot campaign in a Western language. The Arabic source is discussed in a monographic-length study of Peter's campaign written in Arabic: Suhayr Muḥammad Na'īna', *Al-ḥarūb al-ṣalibiyya al-muta'khira: ḥamlat Butrus al-Awwal Lusignan'ala al-Iskandariyya 1375/767* [The Late Crusades: Peter I of Lusignan's Campaign against Alexandria 1365/767] (Al-Haram, Egypt, 2002).

Kitāb al-Ilmām's account of the prolonged Cypriot-Mamluk struggle as factual complements for the Western sources of the late fourteenth century, essentially completing a Western narrative of the events with details from the other side.¹⁰ In that book, Atiya effectively presented a dismembered narrative of the Alexandrian campaign exiled from its Mamluk context, with no mention of the texture of the historical writing or its various digressions. In 1977, after the publication of the last volume of the Arabic edition, Atiya then wrote a short research monograph, summarizing the contents and importance of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*.¹¹ He argued for the significance of the source as the single most extensive extant eyewitness account of 1365 in Alexandria, and gave al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī the erudite title of "encyclopedist."

Medievalists without Arabic only have access to the limited summaries of Atiya and Combe concerning the work. The latter gave a description of the Berlin and Cairo manuscripts as the prolegomena for a partial edition which apparently never appeared, and his comments about the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* betray his idea of the historical value of the work: "[m]alheureusement cette oeuvre est remplie de digressions étendues, qui détournent l'attention du sujet principal" [unfortunately this work is full of long digressions that distract attention away from the main subject].¹² Scholars of Arabic historiography are indebted to Atiya and to the library of Arabic classics at the Osmania University in Hyderabad for opting in the end to publish an unabridged Arabic edition of the long work. Atiya's own assessment of the work is, however, unfortunately marred by a condescending tone and what reads as a lack of appreciation for the complex textuality of medieval Arabic historiography. Atiya writes that al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī

simply stuffed his data in the text, wandering from one subject to another indiscriminately. Yet, it would be a serious error to discard his work on that premise; for, in the midst of the labyrinth of his somewhat unconnected statements, mainly written in artificial rhymed style, one can stumble over details of the most unusual and important nature, scattered haphazard here and there. We have tried to remedy this confusion

¹⁰ Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), 345–78.

¹¹ Atiya, *A Fourteenth-Century Encyclopedist from Alexandria*, passim.

¹² Etienne Combe, "Le Texte de Nuwairi sur l'attaque d'Alexandrie par Pierre I de Lusignan," *Majallat Kulliyat al-Adāb* [Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Alexandria] 3(1946), 99–110.

and the author's unjustifiable aberrations by grouping the subject-matter of this vast text into fourteen long indices....¹³

Later in the same essay he points to "wanderings and literary aberrations (mustatradāt)...[digressions that] allowed himself to be drawn into dealing with a multitude of other empires, both ancient and medieval."¹⁴ It has been well established that late medieval Arabic historiography was indeed highly dependent on compilation and intertextuality.¹⁵ This poses a great problem, however, for the medievalist interested in the study of Arabic histories. Putting aside whether such complex textuality is "aberrant" or not, we can only wonder if the source of many of the eyewitness or pseudo-eyewitness events that took place in Alexandria was al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī himself or reliable observers with whom he was acquainted. When it comes to the long passages not directly speaking of, but rather inspired by, the Cypriot attack, in the absence of source studies, we can be less sure of the provenance of such erudite collections of information. Too little work has been done on the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* to say for sure. The thesis of multiple authors, or of forms of complex scribal or authorial *remanie-ment*, cannot also be ruled out. What can be said for sure is that in the section of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* which recounts the siege of Alexandria itself, multiple discursive styles permeate the account of events and the text abounds with anecdotes, fragments of religious texts, snippets of classical poetry, as well as poetry composed for the occasion in a variety of genres: *madah* (praise), *rithā'* (elegy) or *hijā'* (satire). It is to this portion of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, the siege of Alexandria scene, that this article will turn. Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's history not only accommodates these kinds of poetic reflections on past and present, but uses them to heighten the importance of the very events of 1365.

Some Arabic historical scholarship today is even uncomfortable with al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī as a historical source. Placing the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* in the context of the other shorter Arabic sources of the 1365 sack, van Steenbergen, for example, has expressed caution with Atiya's assessment that the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is an invaluable source, citing

¹³ Atiya, *A Fourteenth-Century Encyclopedist from Alexandria*, 13.

¹⁴ Atiya, *A Fourteenth-Century Encyclopedist from Alexandria*, 17.

¹⁵ For one recent study of the role of compilation in the historiographic tradition of the Zanj rebellion, see Kurt Franz, *Kompilation in arabischen Chroniken: Die Überlieferung vom Aufstand der Zang zwischen Geschichtlichkeit und Intertextualität vom 9. bis ins 15. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 2004).

factual inconsistencies in the account and what he terms al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's "[Muslim] fanaticism and personal involvement" in the events as possible reasons for his "bias" as historian.¹⁶ While caution is no doubt required when using such a complex text, the judgments of the above scholars have, I believe, unfairly diverted attention away from Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī as an essential source for elucidating the kinds of historical thinking one finds about the violence in the fourteenth-century Mediterranean. Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is a long work indeed that addresses many different subjects and it is written from time to time from a providential perspective, but far from being "unjustifiably [aberrant]", it is a fascinating text for scholars of the fourteenth century, not for the reason cited by Atiya, that it is full of dusty gems of erudition, but that it provides us with such an unfamiliar account of crusade-dominated narratives of the second half of the fourteenth century. Recent work on medieval European historiography has made strides in studying the most subjective eyewitness and pseudo-eyewitness of historical events,¹⁷ and there is no reason that the study of the highly personal digressivity of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* could not provide equally fascinating insight into the way that eyewitness events of the present—especially the instability of the Bahri Mamluk period and the catastrophe of the sack of Alexandria—are linked to a discourse of origins and are portrayed in the unfolding of the "sacred history" of Islam. The *Kitāb al-Ilmām* offers, in a nutshell, a unexploited window of opportunity for the intercultural analysis of the period beyond the polarizing terms of crusade and counter-crusade.

Further issues are raised in the problematic use of terminology in previous scholarship. The use of the word "digression" as a translation for two of the indigenous Arabic terms of discursive form (*istiṭrād*, *mustaṭradāt*) requires great care, as we will see below. Furthermore, by labeling al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī an "encyclopedist," Atiya was perhaps fairer in his judgment of the Mamluk text than Combe, recognizing the importance of the scope of material in his historical

¹⁶ Jo van Steenberghe, "The Alexandrian Crusade (1365) and the Mamlūk Sources: Reassessment of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* of al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī (D. A.D. 1372)," in *East and West in the Crusader States: Context—Contacts—Confrontations*, eds. K. Ciggar and H. G. B. Teule (Leuven, 2003), 3: 123–37.

¹⁷ For the example of Froissart, see Peter Ainsworth, "Contemporary and 'Eyewitness' History," in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis (Leiden–Boston, 2003), 248–67.

writing. It is perhaps, however, a misnomer, to call the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* an “encyclopedia” since it does not really resemble the systematically encyclopedic texts of the Latin and Arabic middle ages (Vincent of Beauvais or al-Nuwairī, author of the *Nihāyat al-Arab*, for example).¹⁸ The variety of discourses found in al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī is reminiscent of the discursive complexity of Mézières’ *Le songe du vieil pelerin* or numerous other long texts of the fourteenth century. Mézières and al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī are both well-informed authors, and to borrow a term from Konrad Hirschler, we might say that both are “authors and actors” in history.¹⁹

Digression, a common medieval rhetorical art, should not be understood in the modern pejorative sense of the word as a mass of either unrelated or marginal information, but rather as a self-conscious form of *amplificatio*. In both the Latin and Arabic traditions, it is a form of writing discussed at length in excurses on poetry and rhetoric, connoting a departure from (and return to) the main subject material of a text.²⁰ Some have gone so far as to claim that digressions are not at all of secondary importance, but rather work rhetorically hand in hand with the central excursus of medieval writing. They can also serve as the warp and weft of authorial self-fashioning.²¹ Future studies of al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī in the context of medieval Mediterranean historiography must address this issue of digressivity and its role in

¹⁸ Even though he bears the same first name, this author al-Nuwairī is a different author, and is much better known in Mamluk studies.

¹⁹ For a treatment of subjectivity in Mamluk historical writing, see Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors and Actors* (London–New York, 2006).

²⁰ There is a lively debate over *istiṭrād* (digression) in the Arabic poetic tradition. It is of course on a smaller scale since in poetry it generally involves transitions and image shifts in poems. See Gustave E. Grunebaum, “Arabic Literary Criticism in the 10th Century AD,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 61 (1941), 51–57; S. A. Bonebakker, “Aspects of the History of Literary Rhetoric and Poetics in Arabic Literature,” *Viator* 1 (1970), 75–95; and G. J. H. Van Gelder *Beyond the Line: Classical Arabic Literary Critics on the Coherence and Unity of the Poem* (Leiden, 1982), especially 35–37, 87–89, 94–96; see also Danièle James-Raoul, “La digression dans les arts poétiques des XII^e et XIII^e siècles: aperçu théorique,” in *La digression dans la littérature et l’art du moyen âge. Actes du 29^e colloque du CUERMA 19, 20 et 21 février 2004 Senefiance* 51, ed. Chantal Connochie-Bourgne (Aix-en-Provence, 2005), 227–43.

²¹ It has been suggested that the digression is a meta-literary device in one of the Latin Europe’s most encyclopedic texts, Vincent of Beauvais’ *Speculum historiale*. See Mattia Cavagna, “La notion de digression dans le *Speculum historiale* de Vincent de Beauvais,” in *La digression dans la littérature et l’art du moyen âge. Actes du 29^e colloque du CUERMA 19, 20 et 21 février 2004, Senefiance* 51, ed. Chantal Connochie-Bourgne (Aix-en-Provence, 2005), 89–98. For a more general theoretical treatment of the issue, see Randa Sabry, *Stratégies discursives* (Paris, 1992).

historical thinking. Atiya and Combe, without specifying exactly what they meant by the term digression, effectively asked whether such instances of *amplificatio* are autonomous, sufficiently distant from the central axis of the work and therefore “dispensable” from a partial edition, or if they are imbedded in the writing itself, and, therefore, “indispensible” parts of the historical thought. Weintritt has effectively argued that the digression (*istiṭrād*) is not an unfortunate defect of al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī’s historical writing, but rather a voluntary structure for organizing historical information and setting the narration of events inside a system of meaning; he calls it “conceptualized digression” [*konzeptualisierte Digression*] and qualifies it as a key form of late medieval Arabic historical representation [*Geschichtsdarstellung*].²² Given this way of understanding the link between literary forms and historical narration, I would like to argue here, following Weintritt’s more general comments, that in the fifty some pages of the description of the sack of the city of Alexandria which provide the most event-rich core of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, digression is not only present, but even there it serves as a essential conceptual matrix for the historical argument of the text.²³ Digressions on events distant, both in time and subject, from the siege of Alexandria itself are used in a highly self-conscious manner in the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* establishing connectivity not only between the events of 1365 and other moments of rise and fall in the Islamic world, but also between those events and illustrious moments in Arabic poetry as well as Islamic traditions of hadith—the accounts of the actions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions.

If we compare the European accounts of the Alexandrian sack of 1365, particularly Machaut’s *Prise d’Alexandre* and Mézières’ *Life of Saint Peter Thomas*,²⁴ with the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, the most obvious difference we can note is that both Christian authors follow the generic

²² Otfried Weintritt, *Formen spätmittelalterlicher Islamischer Geschichtsdarstellung: Untersuchungen zu an-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānīs Kitāb al-Ilmām und verwandten zeitgenössischen Texten* (Beirut-Stuttgart, 1992), 87–100. Older studies of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* include I. J. H. Paul Herzsohn, *Der Überfall Alexandriens durch Peter I. König von Jerusalem und Cypern*, Diss. University of Bonn, 1886; Paul Kahle, “Die Katastrophe des mittelalterlichen Alexandrien,” *Mélanges Maspero. III, Orient islamique* (Cairo, 1935), 137–54.

²³ The siege of Alexandria is found mainly in the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* 2: 130–83.

²⁴ Philippe de Mézières, *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas Edited from Hitherto Unpublished Manuscripts*, ed. Joachim Smet (Rome, 1954).

contours of hagiography and heroic literature to cast the protagonists of the campaign in a largely positive light as well as their actions in it as virtuous. It seems a bit obvious to say, but the events have no such primary hagiographic “pull” in al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī, and in his work not only is Peter I of Lusignan vilified from the initial pages, but even the local Mamluk leader is portrayed from such a critical perspective. Whereas the 1291 end of the Latin kingdoms and other French losses in important battles of the Hundred Years War loom in the background of works of the Christian fourteenth century, and permeate different idealistic plans to recover the Holy Land, the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is haunted with a different kind of loss, the recent loss of the author’s own city. That fact of the loss and destruction of his own city is the focal point around which the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is structured, and, importantly, around which this author at times criticizes the very people of his city and the ineffective protection of its army, all the while recalling moments of former defeats and conquests in the history of Islam.

The *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is a very long text, the section on the siege of Alexandria being only a small portion of the full work. The siege scene opens explaining that vice sultan Khalīl Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Bin ‘Arām was absent on *hajj* and that the Amir Yalboghā, also known as Janghrā in the text, was sent to Alexandria in his place. Yalboghā is described as the heroic protector of the city, but is ultimately deeply criticized at the same time by al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī. The *Kitāb al-Ilmām* describes the arrival of the Cypriot fleets in front of Alexandria, their reconnaissance forays into the city, and the beginning of their attacks on the walls. The arrival of the Cairene reinforcements leads to battles in the shallow waters near the shore. The numerous people of the walled city attempt to flee the violence, the foreign residents of the city are punished for the external aggression of Cypriots, and the Christian armies pursue their attack shooting balls of fire into the city. Extensive passages describe how the invading forces raid and pillage the city, and so greedily overload their ships with booty that they began to sink in the harbor. At the end of the scene, and after all the destruction of the city, the text portrays the army of Yalboghā making a heroic advance into the city as the Franks are seen sailing off to sea. The siege narrative, not unlike the rest of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is replete with poetic insertions about the tragedy of Alexandria; it also contains numerous accounts by many people in the town who witnessed the events.

The author describes how he was present for the attack, how he fled Alexandria with his family, and how he returned later on, both to collect his material and compose his *Kitāb al-Ilmām*.

It is not possible to analyze all the various forms of digression in al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's work here. Four selected examples are translated and discussed below in an attempt to illustrate the complex discursivity of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, and to argue, against the position of Atiya and Combe, for the indispensable role played by digression in the siege scene, and more generally for the work as a whole.

A DIGRESSION ON EARLY ISLAM

After his description of the very high waters of the Nile at the exact moment that the Cypriots decided to land in Alexandria, a situation that prevented reinforcements from arriving from Cairo, al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī inserts a long digression on the conquests of lower Egypt by the Arabs. Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī, as Atiya reminds us, is particularly interested in this early moment in Egyptian history. He begins writing of 'Amrū bin al-'Aās, commander and famous companion of the prophet Muhammad who settled the Arabian tribes in and around Alexandria:

Yazīd bin Ḥabīb said that when 'Amrū bin al-'Aās—may God be pleased with him—conquered Alexandria he found its home and its buildings empty and he thought that he should live there. He said: "these dwellings will suffice for us" and he wrote to 'Umar bin al-Khattāb—may God be pleased with him—asking him to accept that they live there. 'Umar told his messenger: "Is there water between me and the Muslims?" The latter responded: "Yes, Prince of the Faithful, provided the Nile flows." So, 'Umar wrote to 'Amrū: "I do not want to house the Muslims with water separating us, be in it winter or in summer, there are simply too many of them." So, 'Amrū bin al-'Aās left Alexandria for Cairo. 'Umar bin al-Khattāb—may God be pleased with him—had done that out of fear, since if he wanted to send them help, so few Muslims lived there, it was so far away and the course of the Nile through the mountains makes it dangerous. 'Amrū sent them people from the Arabian tribes: Lakhām, Juthām, Kinda, al-Azd, Ḥaḍr al-Mawt, Khuzā'a, and al-Mazā'ina and he settled in them in two groups to protect them. The Lakhām lived in a place known as Kūm al-Dikka, the Juthām in Birkat Juthām, the Kinda in Barākil, and al-Azd in Baḥārat al-Azda. Ḥaḍr al-Mawt settled in Baḥārat al-Hadārima, and Khuzā'a settled with al-Mazā'ina in Nāḥiat al-Būqīr to the east of the outskirts of Alexandria. They guarded its

port. Those from the abovementioned tribes who lived in the center of Alexandria watched over two ports, one to the east and one to the west of the peninsula.²⁵

This digression is important since it relates a conversation that took place between ‘Amrū bin al-‘Aās and ‘Umar bin al-Khattāb, two of the Ṣaḥāba—the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. Given these interlocutors and their proximity to the Prophet it is a conversation that has particular authority among Muslims, falling inside the prophetic tradition of “hadith.” The digression adopts an important form not uncommon in Arabic historiography: beginning with the isnād, the names of the scholars who have passed on this information (in this case Yazīd bin Ḥabīb), followed by the hadith and then the small narrative. In al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī this kind of digression usually comes to a close with the expression “intaha,” signifying “the end.” Such a structure from the *isnād* to *intaha* frames the digression, arguably giving it a form of textual autonomy. The digression is not so much autonomous and therefore dispensable, as it is intimately connected within the meaning of the siege narrative, as will become clear below.

This digression not only maps onto the topography of Alexandria a lineage going back as far as the various Arab tribes, the very peoples who were spread around the newly fortified cities of early Muslim conquests, but through the emphasis on water and especially on water separating a people, it also comments on the long standing weaknesses of the city of Alexandria, the city’s two-port topography and the vulnerability of the city to the ebb and flow of the waters of the Nile Delta. Alexandria is portrayed in digressions such as these, not so much as the city of Greco-Roman antiquity known in the Western history, but as a strategic and symbolic city dating from the very origins of Islam. Alexandria represents but one moment of victory in the history of Muslims, particularly of the dawn of Islam, that al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī uses constantly throughout his *Kitāb al-Ilmām*. I do not agree with the judgments of Atiya that our author “labored in search of Islamic triumphs as counterparts to those inglorious defeats to uplift the spirit of Muslims” or that accounts of military conquest given in the text “may be only regarded as illustrative of al-Nuwairī’s interest

²⁵ All translations from the Arabic are mine. *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2:134–35.

in Islamic belligerency across the Middle Ages.”²⁶ Such claims are more histrionic than scientific and reduce the many forms of conquest and violence in the history of Islam used by al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī (or any other author for that matter) in historical writing to a singular and vague concept of “holy war” or “counter-crusade.” The text is undeniably full of historical knowledge of the early conquests and later defeats (see below the digression on Lurqa/Lorca) and it is certain that one of the themes in his work is without a doubt the rise and fall of cities up through the thirteenth century, across the Islamic world from al-Andalus to Baghdad. As the digression goes on, however, the desire to assert continuity in identity is clearly reinforced:

The children of those tribes are today in the year 775 [1365] still known as the “tribes” in Alexandria. They have their own matters and they have thirty-three chiefs who oversee a portion of the tribes. They still dress in Arab garb. The cloth on their turban hangs low and they roll up their sleeves just like their ancestors the Arabs did. ‘Amrū bin al-‘Aās divided up his men, a quarter of them to protect Alexandria, a quarter for the coastline and half of them stayed with him in Cairo. In Alexandria a half of them stayed for six months, and the next shift came for another six months. End.²⁷

Here the description of the conquests establishes a link at the very moment of the siege in the narrative between Alexandrians of early Islam and those of al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī’s day, and this, through a double comparison: the ancestral heritage found in the distribution by tribes and the enduring vestimentary traditions of the city. Furthermore, at the time of ‘Amrū bin al-‘Aās Alexandria was very important for the protection of Cairo, just as it no doubt was in the fourteenth century. As it can be seen clearly from this example, Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī’s digressions are a self-conscious deviation from, and return to, the “main topic.” When the various associations in such digressions can be recognized, it seems prejudicial to judge them as unimportant to the Egyptian version of the siege narrative.

²⁶ Atiya, *A Fourteenth-Century Encyclopedist from Alexandria*, 23. I do not think that we are dealing with the genre of the “book of comfort” as Tarif Khalidi has called the work of al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarani’s contemporary Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī known as *Mu‘īd al-Ni‘am wa Mubīd al-Niqam*. See Khalidi’s *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge, Eng., 1994), 187–88.

²⁷ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 135–36.

A DIGRESSION ON HISTORICAL BATTLES AND MARTYRDOM

After a horrific description of the carnage in the city in which many Alexandrines lost their lives fighting the “Franks” (al-Faranj), al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī describes both their distress at the pillaging of their city and their heroism and martyrdom defending it:

Then, the people of Alexandria saw what they had never witnessed before, never in their whole lives, and their hearts pounded with fear. Each one of them lost his mind as they saw heads flying, and horses dead on the ground. They all pushed each other at the gates. People were slaughtered here and there. Some people stayed put and faced the enemy and they kept the faith (*mujtahid*) and they killed as many Franks as was possible before their heroic martyrdom (*astashada*). It was said that Muhammad al-Sharīf the Butcher attacked the Franks with the slaughterhouse cleaver, he broke all their bones, and said: “*Allahu akbar!* The infidels are dead.” Then a big group rallied against him and he died a heroic death on the island—may God have mercy upon him. One could even see some old jurists, one of whom was Muhammad bin al-Tufāl and he charged the Franks with his sword. Someone told him: “You are going to die Sheikh Muhammad!” And he responded: “That makes me even happier since I will be next to the Prophet Muhammad. What death is better than jihad in the service of God, since I will go to paradise.” He charged them and they exchanged blows until God bestowed martyrdom (*ruzaqa al shahāda*) upon him and finally he attained happiness.²⁸

From this excerpt of the siege narrative, we cannot help but notice the valorization of struggle against an infidel and an uncompromising heroism in the face of death, both being examples of the complex and evolving discourse of martyrdom in Islam.²⁹ Interestingly, this scene is also populated with everyday figures from the contemporary city of Alexandria: Muhammad al-Sharīf the Butcher as well as one of the old jurists, Muhammad Ibn al-Tufāl. What is striking about these examples, in particular the emphasis of the weakness of Alexandrines facing the great violence of the Cypriot-led attack, is how the contemporary

²⁸ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 148–49.

²⁹ Whereas this paper cannot go into the subtleties of notions of martyrdom and jihad in Islam, it is worth noting that the glorious death here while related to battle does not come about as a result of an organized military campaign against an enemy, but rather a defense of one’s city in a surprise attack. While one might disagree with some of his premises, one can begin with the forms of military martyrdom in early Islam discussed by David Cook, *Martyrdom in Islam* (Cambridge, Eng., Cambridge University Press, 2007), chap. 2.

example leads, without any particular transition, into a digression, that of the historical Battle of Uḥud (625 AD) where another companion of the Prophet Muhammad met with martyrdom:

It was said that ‘Amrū bin al-Jamūḥ used to limp and he had four sons with the strength of a lion who participated in the war (*yashadūna... al mashāhid*) with the God’s Prophet—Peace be upon him. The day of the Battle of Uḥud his sons tried to forbid him from leaving to war and told him: “God will forgive you. It is said ‘It is no fault in the blind / Nor in one born lame.’”³⁰ So he went to the Prophet of God—Peace be upon him—and told him: “O Prophet of God, my sons want to keep me from seeing you and going with you. By God I hope to limp all the way to paradise!” And the Prophet of God—Peace be upon him—said God forgives you. You have no obligation to do so (*fa la jihād ‘alaik*). And he said to the man’s sons: “Do not forbid him. Perhaps God wants to bestow martyrdom upon him.” So the man left with the Prophet and he died—May God have mercy upon him. End.³¹

To understand the analogical importance of this battle and the martyrdom of the lame old man for this moment in Alexandrian history, some context is necessary. The Battle of Uḥud was one of the most famous battles of early Islam, where Muhammad and his men faced the Quraish tribe outside of the city of Medina. The Muslims in this battle were outnumbered, as were the Alexandrians in the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, yet the former achieved an early advantage making it seem they were going to win, were it not for a fatal tactical mistake. By analogy, the famous battle serves as a matrix through which al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī can not only create suspense in the moment, but also underscore the heroism of the fighting Alexandrians, or in other words, as an exemplum through which the present can be shaped through the image of the past. The implicit comparison between the two battles not only allows him to depict the battle before the city of Alexandria as a key moment in the history of Muslims, but it also affords him the opportunity to reflect retrospectively on the mistakes of the battle at hand; al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī repeatedly underscores Janghrā’s weakness and the tactical mistake of not closing Bāb al-Diwān during the siege. This double-pronged analysis of the event is common in al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī; he writes simultaneously, and perhaps paradoxically, of the divine will behind such an event, and of the human

³⁰ Qur’an, Surat al-Nūr 24: 61 (Trans. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

³¹ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 179.

error which led to the downfall. Also, the point about the infirmity of the jurists, like the lameness of ‘Amrū bin al-Jamūh, resonates with a refrain in his text about the cruelty of the Franks who attacked children and the elderly without scruples. It is worth pointing out that Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī’s text here has inverted the form found in the previous digression, from narration it leads to a Qur’anic verse, then to hadith-like discussions between the Muhammad and his companions. The author renders the tenacious fight of Alexandrians for their city particularly heroic, through his use of such conversations rooted in a distant past of early Islam.

A DIGRESSION ON THE BESIEGED ANDALUSIAN CITY OF LURQA

The capture of the city of Alexandria via its inlet occurred much faster than would have been expected, a commentary which is corroborated by the Christian and the Muslim sources. The destruction to the city was extensive. Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī’s siege narrative emphasizes these two points:

Some were killed, others were detained. Some were saved, others were defeated. Still others escaped after they threw down their arms struck with confusion. Some of them left their country and emigrated. Some crowded at the gates and they perished. Some were ruined and were cursed to be scattered all over. As fast as they captured the inlet, the hearts of the inhabitants were struck were sorrow. The Franks gained victory on the very same day that they disembarked from their ships onto the land of the embankment (*al-barr*). The Frankish siege did not take two days, instead they defeated the Muslims in two hours. It has been said: “The siege of the cities and the fortifications usually needs a year or two.”³²

What follows this small saying about sieges is a longer digression, related by a local sheikh, most likely of the Andalusian diaspora, given the subject of medieval Iberian Islam and his family name, al-Tūnsī:

Abo ‘Amrū al-Tūnsī, the learned, commendable teacher, sheikh and theologian, told me about his maternal grandfather who said: “I am of the people of the city of Lurqa (Lorca) in the barr al-Andalus. I was in my city when it was besieged by the Franks for more than twenty-three years. They built a whole city next to it. Toward the end, the Muslims

³² *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 159–60.

were in such dire straits that a man would go out with a plate full of gold and jewels and could not even barter them for wheat and barley. There were no dogs or cats or rats left since they had eaten them all. They had even taken the wood from their roofs and their house and burned it underneath their vats of gruel. Later the Franks finally claimed victory.” The Muslims left the city after all this time and the Franks captured the city. The Franks took Alexandria from its people in a few days as they were all escaping even though they had enough food and water to last until help came from Cairo—there is no power and no strength save in God—but it was fated to happen this way. If the Muslims had stayed in the city, and each and every one threw stones at the Franks from the roofs of their houses, they would have saved their homes.³³

This digression is based on a comparison between the swift, unexpected fall of Alexandria and the long debilitating siege of the city of Lurqa (now Lorca) in southeastern Iberia, likely during the Murcian rebellion in 1264. It echoes the poetic tone of loss in other parts of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* as it remembers the slow devastating loss of the lands of al-Andalus.³⁴ Both parts of the comparison are also about European victories over the Muslims, however Alexandria was taken so quickly that the people, including al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī himself, were forced to flee into the surrounding countryside. The siege and destruction in Alexandria, as al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī emphasizes throughout his narrative of it, was both avoidable and fated to happen. Alexandrians had not been incapacitated to the point of starvation, nor had their city been slowly and cruelly besieged. Such a comparison underscores perhaps the volatility of the region and the luck with which Peter I of Lusignan was able to carry out the siege. The author is clear that the city was caught off guard, and that as simple a plan as lapidating the Franks could have bought them time and saved them.

Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī’s history is indeed a rich text from a political or a military perspective full of anecdotes about political struggles in the Bahri Mamluk period and about war and military techniques. In it one can find a critique of the powers that be in fourteenth-century Alexandria and a focus on tactics and the unfolding of the siege. The historical writing, as in the above example, sometimes attempts to

³³ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 160–61.

³⁴ The parallel, established in longstanding rhetorical traditions among Arabs and Europeans, of mourning loss in the fourteenth century, on the one hand of the lands of al-Andalus and on the other of the Latin kingdoms, is potentially a rich topic for future work. I acknowledge Jeff Richards for making this observation.

explain the particularity of the tactics, their successes and their failures. Other times al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī cites other author's predictions of the fall of the city (from previous poetic texts and series of dreams throughout the Islamic world), and even gives his famous "seven reasons" for the Cypriot attack on Egypt. The above example of digression is tantamount to contemporary oral history, coming not from great authorities of the past, but from one of al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī's contemporaries who holds the memory of the loss of Lurqa. This is a very different kind of authority than that we have seen above. The *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is so not much presentist, projecting back the tensions of a contemporary world into past events, recent or far, as it uses the past to elucidate the present, ultimately creating a mirroring effect between distant past and tumultuous present. There are nonetheless tensions that exist between the different kinds of digressive parallels created with moments in Islamic history through hadith and poetry: recent ones including the sieges of al-Andalus, as we saw here, and the Mongol attack on Baghdad in 1258 by Hulagu Khān, or more distant ones such as the Bahraini emir Abū Ṭahir's siege of Mecca in 919. It goes without saying that the world was a very different one in 1365 from the earlier years of Islam. These parallels between different moments of the history of Islam form a matrix, albeit an eclectic and uneven one, through which early Islam and contemporary history exist in dialogue with one another, but also through which *adab* and poetry capture that fatality of Alexandria as the next city to fall to the assaults of the Franks. There are many yet undiscovered connections and tensions to be understood in al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī's text between past, the time of the event and the unfolding of history by the will of God.

A POETIC DIGRESSION

In the siege of Alexandria scene, Al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī's successive short poetic insertions written in a variety of styles seem to serve many purposes: irony, dramatic tension, or reinforcement of the horrific reality of the siege. There are two moments of complex literary flourish, which stand out however, framing the entire event from initial siege to departure of the Franks. The opening of the siege scene is replete with pageant-like performance and a display of the military power of the city with fancy textiles, weaponry and military

maneuvering. The metaphor of a colorful garden extends this earthly display of elegance, the senses and military prowess to the providential luck of the people of Alexandria: “these are the people of paradise.”³⁵ The vice-sultan Janghrā’s initial boast sounds impressive, but rings ironic, within paragraphs where we realize that his ruler’s insight is highly flawed, not to mention in the previous digression when we read that God has fated the Alexandrians to be defeated.

After the extensive description and some fifty pages of text al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī brings the attack on Alexandria to a close with a complex poetic ornament. It is a moment that deserves our attention. After the excessive violence, pillaging and burning of the city, as the Franks got back into their booty-laden ships and began to set sail, we witness a military advance led by Janghrā, “like a swarm of locusts.” There we find a fragment of an elegiac poem written by an unnamed poet that idealizes the army’s power:

The Franks took off as someone wrote in his elegy (*marthiyya*) on Alexandria:

Oh to set the broken limb	if he wants it to be set
From his high honored seat	bounty covers the earth like the sun
Yabolgha, lion of war, contained	the renegades’ tyranny with his sword. ³⁶

It is easy to feel transported by the old Arabian epithet, “lion of war” (*laith al-waghgha*) and the triumphant tone of the verses into a heroic realm in this paragraph.³⁷ The poetic insertion continues:

The *barr* filled up with valiant armies Leaders, men of action, white-starred
Lean-bodied horses attacking and retreating, assailing the enemy
The fearless lion Yalboghā lead them to protect religion
He took revenge on the enemy; until there was no trace of them in the inlet

When the Franks saw his army advancing on them at full speed
They knew there was no way out from a huge battle, save flight.³⁸

The “leaders” of the city come to protect it as saviors, as fighting “men of action,” (*min ūlī al-‘azm*) a term used in Arabic for the most important five prophets: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Muhammad and sometimes

³⁵ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 130.

³⁶ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 178.

³⁷ See also above the digression on historical battles and martyrdom where the lame ‘Amrū bin al-Jamūh is also called a lion.

³⁸ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 178.

for Isaac, Jacob, David, Job or Jesus. The comparison portrays such great men ushering civilization to safety and seems to bring the present into alignment with sacred history. The irony of the possibility of a further battle could not be greater, since the European sources, especially Guillaume de Machaut, recall that it was Peter I's men who refused to stay in Alexandria for fear of not being able to hold the city, preferring instead to run off with the booty. Such heroic exaggeration is doubly ironic when one considers how the "fearless leaders" late arrival was unable to stop the massive pillaging of the city, but described as able to avert a really "huge battle." Here we are faced with an all too common moment in the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* where the desire to depict contemporary history in the lineage of great salvational struggles is confronted with the shocking documentary value of eyewitness. Whether al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī meant such flourish to be ironic, and therefore, another criticism of the delayed Mamluk response to the attack, is unclear. A thorough analysis of his use of poetic insertions of all kinds—elegiac, heroic, satirical—into the prose text is needed to be able to say with greater certainty. What follows this passage, however, is yet another opportunity for the author to show off his poetic prowess. He inserts a small verse florilegium, which fuses together three lines from the Andalusian poet Ibn Zaidūn, with two from pre-Islamic poetry Imru' al-Qais, followed by more of Ibn Zaidūn. This subject material of this "fusion poetry," namely the lost beloved, is a rather direct reference to the hostages who had been taken from Alexandria in the attack, but also metonymically, I believe, an allusion to the other lost, ravished beloved here, his city.³⁹ It is unclear to me whether al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī confected this poetic miscellany himself or if he copied it from somewhere else. In line with the rest of the work, its clever composition buckles together two key moments in history no doubt, the Arabian peninsula of the pre-Islamic period and al-Andalus, but also two moments of Arabic literary memory, the contemplation of the traces of the beloved who has left, and the story of another lost beloved set inside the tale of a lost homeland. By striking this register and evoking the interiorization of the lost beloved and city, activating many associative and poetic meanings of loss, al-Nuwayri al-Iskandarani ends the section describing the details of the sack of Alexandrian of 1365.

³⁹ *Kitāb al-Ilmām*, 2: 179.

This poetic frame for the siege of Alexandria bears a slight resemblance to the hagiography and heroic literary paradigms of the Western sources, Machaut and Mézières, in the sense that they both cast the protagonists of the military standoff as heroic, but the heroism of the flourish is not sustained throughout the *Kitāb al-Ilmām*. There are of course numerous other interpolated anecdotes that one could analyze—in a span of text amounting to less than two percent of the total work—from the merchant who tried to flee the gates of the city carrying so much money that it dropped from his hands; the description of the sheikh who watched from inside the eaves of a storehouse as the Franks murdered a young boy in the street; the elderly man thrown from the top of the minaret who fell to his death snapping his neck; the flight of Alexandrians to the countryside into precarity; or even the foreign merchant's desperation and slow descent into insanity. There is even a long interpolation on the techniques of Alexander and the Indian kings in time of war to use flying pigeons with vials filled with flaming naphtha tied to their legs in order to set the thatched roofs of cities aflame. They deserve further attention in a more in-depth study.

* * *

Al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's graphic depictions of the violence brought upon the city and the dense materiality in the descriptions of the pillaging of a city are shocking and apparent to even the general reader. The details in this section of the work are indeed very powerful, and they provide a vivid contribution to knowledge of the raid of fourteenth-century Alexandria, as Atiya so clearly suggested. The discussion here of the digressions has attempted to illustrate that al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī has imbedded numerous digressive micro-narratives in his work designed to illustrate, by a number of literary associations, analogy and even metonym, how the singular unfortunate events of 1365 fit with a larger matrix of historical culture. It also has shown how the heroization of the Alexandrian resistance is only one part of this complex historical source and suggests how problematic the simple label "counter crusade" actually is. This essay began with a plea to discard the claim that al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's historical writing was marked by an aberrant and excessive personal involvement, and in particular, by "dispensable" digressions. It ends with the conclusion that historical writing in the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* illustrates the catastrophe which befell the city interwoven with fragments of Islamic cultural

memory, relating it to other such losses in the century preceding the life of the author, as Mamluk society regained the lands of Palestine from the crusaders and mourned from a distance the slow loss of cities from the borderlands of the chaotic Taifa kingdoms of al-Andalus.

The *Kitāb al-Ilmām* obviously does not share with Mézières or Machaut the master narrative of a renewed tradition of crusade in the fourteenth century as the reason for the attack on Alexandria. It sets violence in the contemporary Eastern Mediterranean inside of a much larger frame than just the post-1291 period. It also offers a fascinating counterpoint to the other events of 1365 on account of its complex texture that does not fix the narrative focal point to be the crusader king or saint. Far from offering such hagiographic portrait of a military leader, or a sacralization of their military prowess in the manner of a Froissart,⁴⁰ or a Machaut, al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī vocalizes a number of popular opinions from the citizen-on-the-street to bolster his rather critical view of the strategic decisions taken in the face of the attack of his city. To borrow a term from Tarif Khalidi, al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's text has something in it of a *siyasa*-oriented history, sharing a bit of his contemporary Ibn Khaldūn's philosophy of history.⁴¹ By *siyasa*-oriented history is meant historical thinking that tackles issues such as the problems faced by sedentary civilization, problems of the city, governance and princely behavior. Even though the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* is full of references to early Islam, the problems of fourteenth-century Mamluk Egypt stem from a very different, chaotic urban landscape, which, not unlike Peter's Cyprus, was a highly unstable dynasty marked by multiple episodes of violence. Clearly, the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* did not jettison the attachment with a Bedouin early Arabian past as the first two digressions illustrated. Khalidi writes:

This 'then-and-now' motif was a fertile source of historiographic speculation, re-exciting memories, demanding comparisons, relativizing moral and political values and instituting a quest for patterns of private and public conduct by which the community could be morally and politically re-armed to face the dangers of the hour.

⁴⁰ See Ainsworth, "Contemporary and 'Eyewitness' History," 271–73. He writes "Froissart's major preoccupation seems to be representing and consecrating the spectacle of the apertises d'armes of knights, he is their clerical disciple, secretary and celebrant", 273.

⁴¹ Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 182–231.

The third digression and various other passages in the text show how for al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī, the political body of the city of Alexandria is not only its inspired prince, but is rather made up of numerous actors, from the merchants all the way up to the vice sultan. The fourth digression cited here seems so idealistic and rarified as if to relegate the vice sultan to a fantasy world of old-fashioned chivalrous *fait d'armes*. Each of them illustrates a different aspect of digression in al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī's text. Much more analysis of the texture of his historical writing needs to be done.

Ultimately how one views the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* will depend on which part of it is read. It is a complex and multivocal text. More work also needs to be done to resituate the events of the Alexandrian campaign of Peter I of Lusignan, behind which lurk the ideological writings of Philippe de Mézières, in terms of the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* as a way of equalizing that imbalance of historical perspective of the period. This introductory study has not looked at the multiple descriptions of the aftermath of the Alexandria campaign, to see if the various raids on the Turkish and Syrian coast and the end of the Cypriot-Mamluk conflict are set in similar terms as the sack of Alexandria. It has also not looked to all the extradiegetic digressions of al-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānī. From this small sample of digressions, it is clear, however, that the *Kitāb al-Ilmām* presents a fascinating counterpoint of our understanding of the various meanings attached to the events of 1365 by the pen of one Muslim author. A fuller published translation of the Mamluk source in the future will no doubt challenge scholars to nuance their conception of historical writing of such crisis moments in the fourteenth century, and perhaps even to opt for a study of the raid, not the crusade, for a more global understanding of violence in the period. That, in turn, will hopefully provide an opening for deeper forms of intercultural analysis that such a well documented moment in Eastern Mediterranean history can provide.

SPECIAL NOTE

PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES ET L'UNIVERSITÉ

Sylvain Piron

Parcourant les œuvres inédites de Philippe de Mézières à la recherche d'éléments biographiques, Nicolae Jorga n'avait trouvé aucun indice permettant d'envisager une formation universitaire de l'auteur du *Le songe du vieil pelerin*. La donnée la plus certaine que fournisse Philippe lui-même sur ses études figure dans son éloge de la ville d'Amiens; c'est là qu'il dit avoir reçu le baptême et avoir été éduqué «in grammaticalibus¹.» La chaleureuse lettre adressée aux chanoines d'Amiens après 1365 semble confirmer que sa première éducation s'est déroulée aux abords de la cathédrale de cette ville². De façon négative, l'auteur souligne à l'occasion qu'il n'est ni docteur en droit, ni licencié en théologie³.

L'hypothèse d'une formation parisienne n'a été soulevée que par Olivier Caudron en 1981⁴. Dans une courte note, ce dernier proposait de corriger sur un point crucial l'édition du testament de Philippe de Mézières réalisée par Jorga. Dans l'alinéa concernant la seule personne que Philippe décrit comme «magister meus», les mots «pro suis» doivent être lus «Parisius.» Ce maître Pierre d'Erches, à qui sont promis vingt ducats, était donc un maître parisien⁵. Le fait est confirmé par sa présence parmi les «discreti viri magistri» qui prirent part à une délibération de l'université, le 5 mars 1351, en faveur d'un étudiant

¹ Nicolas Jorga, *Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405) et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896), 11–12, citant *Salve S. Parens*, Paris BnF lat. 14454, f. 22r: «Sic et ego homuncio ad civitatem Ambianensem, ad quam patres mei confluebant, in qua puerilibus annis in grammaticalibus fui nutritus et, quod plus est, crismate sancto a matrice ecclesia Ambianensi sumpto, in baptismo perunctus.»

² Ibid., 28.

³ Ibid., 27, citant *Contemplatio hore mortis*, Paris, Arsenal, 499, f. 204: «nec doctor decretorum nec licentius in conventu theologorum.»

⁴ Olivier Caudron, «Philippe de Mézières étudiant à l'université de Paris», *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes* 139 (1981), 245–46.

⁵ Nicolas Jorga, «Le testament de Philippe de Mézières», *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'étude de l'Europe sud-orientale* 8 (1921), 119–140. Il faut donc lire, 132: «Item, volo quod magistro Petro de Herches, qui fuit magister meus, Parisius, dentur, et si solvisset debitum universe carnis, volo quod dentur pro anima sua.» Le montant du legs est sous-entendu et identique à celui des entrées précédentes.

emprisonné par l'évêque⁶. Dans la première version de son testament, rédigée à Venise en 1370, Philippe se montre incertain du sort de nombreux légataires dont il ne doit pas avoir eu de nouvelles depuis un certain temps. C'est le cas pour Pierre d'Erches dont il ne sait s'il est encore en vie, mais la même incertitude s'étend également à ses neveux devenus clercs. Si aucun d'eux n'est de ce monde, ses livres devront être distribués entre les couvents mendiants d'Amiens. La nouvelle version du testament rédigée l'année suivante se montre plus précise. Entre temps, des renseignements ont dû être pris. Le fait que Pierre d'Erches n'y apparaisse plus signifie probablement que Philippe avait appris entre temps son décès⁷.

Doit-on conclure de cette mention que Philippe de Mézières a fréquenté l'université parisienne avant de choisir le métier des armes et de quitter la France en entrant au service de Luchino Visconti en 1345?⁸ La preuve externe semble très solide, mais avant de trancher, il faut d'abord considérer un autre document concernant la carrière de ce maître Pierre. Une lettre apostolique d'Urbain V en sa faveur, datée du 5 janvier 1363, lui accorde un canonat dans l'église Saint-Pierre de Lille. Le document souligne la carrière jusque là peu rémunératrice du requérant: depuis des années maître ès arts à Paris, ayant un temps servi comme régent de l'université et désormais étudiant à la faculté de théologie, il n'a pas obtenu la prébende qui lui était promise à Noyon et n'a eu jusqu'à cette date, pour subvenir à ses besoins, que les modestes revenus de l'église paroissiale d'Arvillers au diocèse d'Amiens⁹. Cette indication doit éveiller notre curiosité géographique. Il se trouve qu'Arvillers est situé à moins de dix kilomètres de

⁶ Henri Denifle, E. Chatelain, eds., *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, t. 3 (Paris, 1894), 3–4.

⁷ Les passages signalés par Jorga comme des «ajouts» correspondent en fait à une version révisée du testament, comme le signale Olivier Caudron. Désormais, Philippe connaît le nom de ses neveux clercs qui sont encore en vie. La formule «et si non inveniuntur nepotes mei clerici, idest vitam clericalem querentes, volo quod libri dividantur Ambianis, in conventibus mendicantibus», est désormais effacée, «Le testament», 131, et les noms des deux neveux concernés sont mentionnés, *ibid.*, 135.

⁸ Dans «Philippe de Mézières étudiant», Caudron suggérait de placer ces études dans les années 1350–54, avant qu'il découvre lui-même des preuves de l'activité militaire de Philippe dans cette période, *Idem*, «Un épisode de la guerre de Cent Ans: Philippe de Mézières, capitaine de Blérancourt dans les années 1350», *Mémoires de la Fédération des sociétés d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Aisne* 29 (1984), 69–73. Une date antérieure à 1345 est retenue dans *Idem*, «Philippe de Mézières», *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, t. 12 (Paris, 1984), coll. 1310.

⁹ M.-H. Laurent, ed., Urbain V, *Lettres communes*. t.1. (Paris, 1954–1958), 443–44.

Mézières-en-Santerre, et que le village d'Erches se trouve à peine trois kilomètres plus loin. L'élève et le maître étaient donc des compatriotes en un sens très étroit. Cette proximité géographique peut inciter à remettre en cause l'interprétation donnée par Olivier Caudron du legs testamentaire.

Certes, comme il le dit lui-même, Philippe n'a pas grandi au village de Mézières, dont ses parents n'étaient pas les châtelains, mais dans la ville d'Amiens. Cependant, une communauté d'origines familiales santerroises a pu compter lorsqu'il s'est agi de lui choisir un maître de grammaire. Un article classique d'Astrik Gabriel a mis en évidence le sens précis que revêt cette formation «in grammaticalibus.» Cet enseignement préparatoire en langue et littérature latines était notamment délivré dans les collèges parisiens à de très jeunes étudiants qui n'étaient pas encore aptes à suivre les cours de la faculté des arts¹⁰. Outre les leçons données dans les collèges, certains maîtres parisiens tenaient également des écoles de ce type¹¹. Mais un tel niveau d'enseignement était aussi bien accessible dans une ville de l'importance d'Amiens. C'est sans doute sur place, sans engager des frais supplémentaires liés à un séjour dans une ville universitaire, que se formaient les jeunes gens qui ne se destinaient pas à la poursuite d'études longues. Il est donc vraisemblable de penser qu'avant de se consacrer à l'apprentissage des armes, Philippe a acquis son latin et les bases de sa culture classique à Amiens, vers l'âge de dix à douze ans, autour des années 1336–1340, auprès d'un jeune enseignant, originaire d'un village proche de celui de sa famille, qui allait par la suite faire lui-même carrière à Paris. Maître ès arts en 1351 au plus tard et encore actif dans cette fonction en 1363, Pierre d'Erches a pu résider et enseigner à Amiens à la fin des années 1330, avant de parvenir à la maîtrise ès arts à Paris une dizaine d'années plus tard. Pour appuyer une telle interprétation du testament, il suffit d'introduire dans le texte une virgule entre les qualificatifs «magister meus» et «Parisius.» L'expression devrait alors se comprendre, non pas au sens d'un legs à «celui qui était mon maître quand j'étudiais à Paris» mais à «celui qui fut mon maître de grammaire

¹⁰ Astrik Gabriel, «The Preparatory Teaching in the Parisian Colleges during the XIVth Century», *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 21 (1951), 449–83, repris in Idem, *Garlandia. Studies in the History of the Medieval University* (Notre Dame, 1969).

¹¹ William J. Courtenay, «The Arts Faculty at Paris in 1329», in O. Weijers, L. Holtz, eds., *L'enseignement des disciplines à la Faculté des arts (Paris et Oxford, XIII^e–XV^e siècle)* (Turnhout, 1997), 55–69.

à Amiens et qui exerce désormais à Paris.» Cette lecture s'écarte sans doute du sens obvie de la formulation employée dans le legs, mais elle paraît plus conforme aux données biographiques certaines concernant Philippe et Pierre.

Il reste à considérer une dernière objection. Joël Blanchard souligne en effet que le Vieil Pelerin, vers la fin du *Songe*, décrit l'université de Paris comme sa «mère¹².» Dans ce cas, l'expression ne semble pas avoir un sens biographique. Elle apparaît en effet dans une formule canonique, visant à soumettre l'ouvrage à la correction de l'Université et de l'Eglise, qui est elle aussi présentée comme «mère¹³.» Plus précisément, cette formule rappelle une précédente demande de correction dans laquelle l'Université est cette fois décrite comme «fille» du roi, mais sans que soit évoqué un lien personnel avec le Pelerin¹⁴. Cette reprise du lieu commun de l'université comme «alma mater» n'exprime sans doute pas autre chose que la révérence à l'égard de cette institution de savoir, de la part d'un lettré qui ne l'a pas fréquentée. Face au nombre de passages présentant un caractère ouvertement biographique dans lesquels une éducation parisienne n'est jamais évoquée, cette seule allusion ne semble pas assez ferme pour envisager que Philippe ait véritablement poursuivi ses études à Paris.

A titre de confirmation, on peut noter que la culture déployée par Philippe de Mézières dans ses différents écrits n'implique pas d'autre formation initiale que celle d'un «grammairien.» On peut tout d'abord l'observer par contraste avec un auteur presque contemporain, aussi prolifique que lui et tout autant intéressé par l'alchimie, dont les œuvres ne présentent pas davantage de caractère universitaire, mais qui a pour sa part mené des études à la faculté des arts—de Toulouse en l'occurrence. Dans les différents écrits retrouvés de Jean

¹² Joël Blanchard, «Introduction», dans Philippe de Mézières, *Songe du Vieux Pelerin* (Paris, 2008), 12, n. 2.

¹³ Coopland, *Le Songe*, 2: 502, ch. 316: «Encore il me souvient bien ma dame [...] que cestui Songe [...] je l'ay soubmis et soubmez a l'examen de la venerable dame ma mere l'Université de Paris et a la correction debonnaire de ma mere, sainte eglise.»

¹⁴ Coopland, *Le Songe*, 2: 476, ch. 304: «Et pource, Beau Filz, que pour ton jeune aage tu ne puez avoir plaine cognoissance de tant d'exemples et hystoires cy dessus proposées, touchans aux vertuz et aux vices, pource est il que a ta gracieuse et venerable et tresamee fille l'Université de Paris, en la doctrine de mes suers et de moy tu ayes ton recours. A l'examen de laquelle Université et a sa correction en la vraye obediencie de sainte eglise, Beau Filz, le Vieil Pelerin entierement se soubzmet et rapporte [...] la dicte Université doncques, Beau Filz, ta fille, ton tresor et lumiere du royaume de Gaule...»

de Roquetaillade, on voit apparaître de façon récurrente des traces plus ou moins prononcées d'une formation en logique, qui sont en revanche totalement absentes chez Mézières¹⁵. Chez ce dernier, ce n'est que de façon très incertaine qu'un raisonnement est décomposé en « majeure » et « mineur » d'un syllogisme¹⁶. Le nom de Guillaume d'Ockham n'est évoqué qu'en tant que maître de sophismes auprès duquel pourraient se former les avocats¹⁷.

S'il n'a pas fréquenté l'université, Philippe de Mézières a du moins fréquenté au cours des années 1370 l'un des plus grands universitaires de son temps en la personne de Nicole Oresme. L'essentiel de ses références à Aristote provient ainsi des traductions commentées en français qu'Oresme réalisa pour le compte de Charles V. Ces versions de l'*Ethique* et des *Politiques* figurent d'ailleurs en tête des ouvrages conseillés au jeune Charles VI, immédiatement après la Bible¹⁸. Diverses sentences attribuées à Aristote s'inspirent davantage des gloses du philosophe normand que du texte original. C'est le cas, de façon manifeste, lorsqu'il est expliqué que la magnanimité est par excellence une vertu royale¹⁹. La maxime attribuée simultanément à Aristote, Sénèque et Cicéron, selon laquelle « nulle violence ne peut longuement durer », est de même un axiome fondamental de la pensée politique d'Oresme, mis en avant dès son *Traité des monnaies*²⁰. En outre, comme on le sait bien, la critique de l'astrologie judiciaire présente dans le *Songe du Viel Pelerin* s'inspire explicitement du « beau trayctie sur ceste matiere que fist le tresvaillant et subtil et real philosophe des meilleurs qui fust depuis Aristote, le preudomme Maistre Nychole Oresme, solennel

¹⁵ Voir Sylvain Piron, « Le *Sexdequiloquium* de Jean de Roquetaillade », in *Oliviana* 3 (2009) [en ligne] <http://oliviana.revues.org/index327.html>.

¹⁶ Coopland, *Le Songe*, 2: 365, ch. 266: « Et ce soit dit au propoz pour une majeur en ma proposition. Venant doncques a la minor. » Le passage en question s'inspire de la traduction de l'*Ethique* de Nicole Oresme.

¹⁷ Coopland, *Le Songe*, 1: 475, ch. 93: « Car se les advocaz devoient aller en Angleterre pour empeter d'Ocam ou ung ou deux soutilz et captieux sophismes... »

¹⁸ Coopland, *Le Songe*, 2: 222, ch. 229: « tu doys souverainement delicter de lire et estudier les deux livres solennelz que compousa le tressaige philosophe et theologien maistre Nichole Oresme de Lisieux, a la requeste de ton bon pere, qui fu saige et preudomme. »

¹⁹ Coopland, *Le Songe*, 2: 341, ch. 260: « ta magnificence royale soit tousjours et paree et aournee, selon le philosophe Aristote, de magnificence et de magnanimité qui appartient a roy... ».

²⁰ Sur ce point, je me permets de renvoyer à un précédent travail, *Nicolas Oresme: violence, langage et raison politique* (Florence, 1997) (European University Institute Working Paper, HEC n° 97/1).

maistre en theologie, digne evesque de Lisieux²¹. » La reprise de cette critique n'est pas littérale, mais c'est bien à la source d'Oresme que sont puisées les références savantes de cette partie du *Songe*. Pour ne donner qu'un exemple, c'est le cas pour l'unique allusion au *Secretum secretorum* que l'on trouve dans l'œuvre de Mézières²². Les rares œuvres philosophiques qu'il ait étudié indépendamment proviennent d'une initiation, assurément non universitaire, à l'alchimie. C'est ainsi que l'on peut expliquer sa familiarité avec le *De mineralibus* d'Albert le Grand († 1280), abondamment cité dans le *Songe* mais également dans *Le livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*²³.

Ce dernier ouvrage permet de prendre la mesure de sa culture théologique contemporaine. Le texte cité comme référence en matière sacramentelle est un opusculé pré-universitaire dû à Hugues de Saint-Victor²⁴. Dans les différents écrits de Mézières, les nombreuses citations patristiques (Augustin, Grégoire, Ambroise) s'étendent jusqu'à des références fréquentes à Saint Bernard, « le bon bourguignon »²⁵, mais ces lectures s'arrêtent généralement au seuil de la scolastique universitaire des treizième et quatorzième siècles. Outre Albert et Oresme, la principale exception figure dans l'*Oratio tragédica* qui fait une large place à un acteur important des premières générations de l'université parisienne. La cinquième partie de l'*Oratio* est en effet construite autour de longs emprunts à la *Rhetorica divina* de Guillaume d'Auvergne († 1249)²⁶. La fréquentation de ce texte n'autorise pourtant pas à parler d'une culture universitaire. Comme souvent chez un auteur hors

²¹ Coopland, *Le Songe*, 1: 618, ch. 159.

²² Coopland, *Le Songe*, 1: 603, ch. 145: « Aristote en son livres des Secrez des Secrez, conseille au roy Alixandre qu'il ne face riens sans le conseil des saiges astronomes, en repreuvant ceulx qui dient que ma science d'astronomie est inutile. » Comparer avec G. W. Coopland, *Nicole Oresme and the Astrologers. A study of his Livre de divinations* (Liverpool, 1952), 64: « Et pour ce Aristote ou Livre des Secrez, ammoneste le Roy Alixandre qu'il ne face chose au monde sans le conseil d'aucun qui soit sage en la sience des estoilles. »

²³ Joan B. Williamson, ed., *Philippe de Mézières, Le livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage* (Washington, DC, 1993), 298, 300, 313, 323–326.

²⁴ Ibid., 221: « Hue de Saint Victor escript un livre moult bel qu'il intitula *De la Virginité de la Vierge Marie*. Ou quel livre il traite grandement et devotement du sacrement de mariage. » Cf. Hugues de Saint-Victor, *De Beatae Mariae virginitatis*, ed. P. Sicard, trad. B. Jollès, dans *L'œuvre de Hugues de Saint-Victor*, t. 2 (Turnhout, 2000), 171–259.

²⁵ Jorga, 24–28.

²⁶ Je remercie Christopher Schabel de m'avoir transmis une reproduction du manuscrit de l'*Oratio*.

norme, ce traité sur la prière, bâti à l'aide des catégories de la rhétorique classique, ne ressemble à rien de connu ; il ne relève pas d'un enseignement universitaire au sens strict, mais correspond davantage à une visée de formation pastorale²⁷. Cette *Rhetorica divina* a connu une diffusion importante, avec plus de quarante manuscrits conservés²⁸. Certes, une grande partie de ces copies a été produite dans l'Allemagne du XV^e siècle, mais le texte était disponible à Paris à la fin du XIV^e siècle. Un exemplaire copié vers 1400 a ensuite été acquis par la bibliothèque de Saint-Victor (Paris, BnF lat. 14533)²⁹. Il existe d'autres traces de circulation du traité dans la France du Nord au quatorzième siècle³⁰. L'édition critique à venir de l'*Oratio tragedica* pourra chercher à identifier à quelle famille de manuscrits appartenait l'exemplaire employé par Philippe de Mézières. Le résultat de cet examen ne modifiera pas les conclusions que l'on peut tirer de cet examen rapide. La formation initiale reçue à Amiens dans sa jeunesse a permis à Mézières d'enrichir sa culture au fil de sa vie, et de façon plus marquée à partir de son retour en France, à la cour de Charles V, dans les années 1370, sans qu'il y ait besoin d'évoquer pour cela l'hypothèse d'une formation universitaire.

²⁷ Voir J. Reginald O'Donnell, «The Rhetorica divina of William of Auvergne», dans *Images of Man in Ancient and Medieval Thought. Studio Gerardo Verbeke ab amicis et collegis dicata* (Louvain, 1976), 323–33; Jean-Luc Solère, «De l'orateur à l'orant. La 'rhétorique divine' dans la tradition occidentale chrétienne», *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 211 (1994), 187–224; Jean-Yves Tilliette, «Oraison et art oratoire: les sources et le propos de la *Rhetorica divina*», dans *Autour de Guillaume d'Auvergne* († 1349), études réunies par Franco Morenzoni et Jean-Yves Tilliette (Turnhout 2005) 203–15.

²⁸ Jennifer R. Ottman, «List of Manuscripts and editions», dans *Autour de Guillaume d'Auvergne*, 392.

²⁹ Gilbert Ouy, *Les manuscrits de l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor: catalogue établi sur la base du répertoire de Claude de Grandrue (1514)*, t. 2 (Turnhout 1999), 298.

³⁰ Voir notamment les manuscrits d'Avranches, BM 124 (XIV^e); Besançon, BM 252 (scr. 1403); Chartres, BM, 377 (XIV^e, du chapitre); Dijon, BM 224 (XIV^e, de Cîteaux) Reims, BM 656 (début XV^e).

APPENDIX

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE GREAT SCHISM
OF THE WESTERN CHURCH (1378–1417)

Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski

LIST OF POPES 1370–1417

Gregory XI (1370–78) (Pierre Roger de Beaufort)

POPES DURING THE GREAT SCHISM

Avignon Line:

Clement VII (1378–94) (Robert of Geneva)

Benedict XIII (1394–1423) (Pedro de Luna)

Roman Line:

Urban VI (1378–89) (Bartolomeo Prignano)

Boniface IX (1389–1404) (Pietro Tomacelli)

Innocent VII (1404–6) (Cosimo Gentile de' Migliorati)

Gregory XII (1406–15) (Angelo Correr)

Pisan Line:

Alexander V (1409–10) (Pietro Philargi)

John XXIII (1410–15) (Baldassare Cossa)

ELECTED AT THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE:

Martin V (1417–31) (Ottone Colonna)

The Great Schism of the Western Church divided Christian Europe into two and eventually three competing papacies. During most of the fourteenth century, the papacy had resided in Avignon, and all the popes from Clement V (1304–14) to Gregory XI (1370–78) were either French or Occitan. Spurred on by a growing number of saintly and

prophetic voices, Pope Gregory XI finally decided to return the papacy to Rome in 1377.¹ Gregory died before he could truly reestablish his authority in Rome and the election of a new pope that was called in April 1378 caused one of the greatest crises Western Christendom ever had to confront. The conclave consisted of sixteen cardinals who, as they later claimed, felt threatened by an armed mob clamoring for the election of an Italian pope. They eventually settled on Bartolomeo Prignano, the archbishop of Bari, who became pope under the name Urban VI. Instantly unpopular because of his autocratic behavior, he managed to antagonize the cardinals to such an extent that they left Rome, established themselves at Fondi, and proceeded to elect another pope: Robert of Geneva, a relative of the French king Charles V, who reigned as Clement VII. The cardinals claimed that they had elected Urban under duress and that therefore the election had been invalid. There had been many schisms with rival popes prior to 1378, but this was the first time that the same College of Cardinals elected two different popes within the space of five months.

The cardinals had hoped that Urban VI would abdicate upon the election of Clement VII, but he had no intention of doing so. The claims of two different individuals to the papacy meant that every European ruler had to decide which pope to recognize as the legitimate one. Adding to the conflicts of the Hundred Years' War, France, not surprisingly, opted for Clement VII while England immediately adhered to Urban VI. Scotland preferred Clement. The Spanish kingdoms conducted a lengthy inquiry and finally chose the Avignon pope; the Empire and the many Italian states favored the Roman pope. Some areas, such as Flanders, remained divided and others (Naples, for example) switched sides repeatedly. If anyone had hoped that the death of one of the rival popes would lead to an end of the Schism, they were quickly disappointed. Despite strong diplomatic efforts of the French king Clement VII was succeeded by the tenacious Spaniard Pedro de Luna who as Pope Benedict XIII hung on the papacy until after the Council of Constance, which in 1417 finally put an end to the crisis of the Schism. Urban VI had three successors the last of whom was deposed at Constance. Even before Constance the Council

¹ See Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Prophets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism (1378–1417)* (University Park, 2006), 2–11 and Walter Ullmann, *The Origins of the Great Schism* (London, 1948) for a more detailed treatment of this topic.

of Pisa had attempted in 1409 to depose the rival popes Gregory XII and Benedict XIII but the result was not a unified papacy but a triple-headed one: in addition to the Roman and Avignon papal lines there was now a Pisan one. Thus John the XXIII, the second Pisan pope, also had to be deposed at Constance.

The huge Council of Constance, led by secular leaders, in particular the emperor Sigismund, and attended by more than two thousand participants, signaled the reunification of the Western Church, at least until the next schism.² Monastic orders that had been divided by the multiple papacies could now reconcile and Christians could once again look to one undivided authority at the head of their Church.

The Schism had caused much anxiety for Christians. Not only churchmen and politicians had agonized over this crisis but ordinary Christians had also felt the repercussions of the division of their Church's highest office. Philippe de Mézières addressed the problem of the Schism directly in a number of his works and even when he did not speak explicitly of this conflict, like the Hundred Years' War it always hovered in the background of his thoughts and writings.³ In order to understand Philippe and his age one therefore also has to understand the nature and implications of the Great Schism.

² Walter Brandmüller, *Das Konzil von Konstanz, 141–1418*. 2 vols. (Paderborn, 1991–97) and Philip Stump, *The Reforms of the Council of Constance* (Leiden, 1994).

³ Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Prophets, Saints, and Visionaries*, chap. 4.

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